

**SHIFTING IDEAS ABOUT ANCESTORS IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF
IDENTITIES:
AN INTERCULTURAL THEOLOGICAL EVALUATION OF KOREAN
WITNESSES IN SOUTH AFRICA**

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that

the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

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ABSTRACT

Interculturation theology as a way of communication in religious cultural arenas is the most recent and remarkable methodology that can be used to open space for mutual witness and dialogue with regard to ideas about and the *praxes* of ancestral rituals between South Korean and South African Christians. The purpose of this research is to overcome some dichotomised problems that are inherent in exclusive, inclusive, and religious pluralistic approaches in dialogue with other religious cultures. In this regard, we examined some problems of the colonial way of mission and the functional translation of the exclusivistic approach and noted that the inclusive approach also has its weakness, in that it weakens the historicity of the subject. We attempted to show that theocentric and religious pluralistic approaches do not solve the problem of mutual identity simply by searching for commonalities between religious traditions. Our rationale is that although these approaches have their weak points, we should not overlook their benefits. Therefore, in appraising these approaches, attention is drawn to how these benefits may be used to complement one another. Consequently, we proposed a meaning-centred and *praxis*-centred communication methodology using a holistic approach.

To appropriate a meaning-centred and *praxis*-centred methodology of communication, we began by adopting the theological principle of *perichoresis*, which is the inner relationship among the Persons of the Divine Trinity. *Perichoresis* is the foundation of *missio Dei*, which is God's initiative love to the world in *praxis*. Through incarnational self-giving, *missio Dei* is revealed in the world. Secondly, we re-interpreted *perichoresis* as an intercultural term and ideology, based on its components, mutual indwelling, mutual space, and mutual identity. The intercultural meaning of mutual indwelling is continual mutual penetrating, while cultural meaning of mutual space is interpreted as *the others*, that is, from the viewpoint of emptying themselves in mutual communication instead of that of dominion and replacement. Further, we re-interpreted mutual identity through the '*praxis* of with'. Based on this cultural re-interpretation of *perichoresis*, we established a *praxis*-centred and meaning-centred model of interculturation theology.

More importantly, the *perichoretic* model of interculturation enabled us to construct a theological and cultural identity of Christianity in encountering with others, which is the '*praxis* of with'. In particular, the study attempted to apply intercultural communication method to the

encounter between Xhosa churches and Korean missionaries in Khayelitsha in terms of ancestor related matters. Through this intercultural and comparative evaluation of shifting identities, we suggested how Korean missionary and Xhosa churches could mutually construct theological cultural identities.

For this purpose, we first carried out a literature study of Korean and South African indigenous theologies concerning ancestor worship.¹ Subsequently, we conducted an empirical survey in Khayelitsha to determine the missiological views of Korean missionaries in the light of their traditional religious background and Korean theologians' indigenised interpretations of ancestral matters. We also considered the theological positions of some Western missionaries in Khayelitsha on the same issue. Finally, we investigated the identities of Xhosa churches in Khayelitsha on literature and empirical levels and how intercultural theology can be reconstructed to evaluate the missiological identities of Korean missionaries and Xhosa churches in terms of ancestor worship.

¹ The distinction between the terms, ancestor worship and ancestor veneration is no doubt controversial but in this study, the use has already been delimited on p.162 where reference is made to Kuckertz's remark that, "It is already outdated to distinguish worship or veneration of ancestors in the missiological arena" (1981:87). The choice of the term "worship", especially in chapters 3 and 4 of this study is therefore not based on any cultural disregard but on the limitation of the scope of the dissertation and on the consideration of religious factors in ancestor matters and related rituals of both Koreans and South Africans.

OPSOMMING

Interkulturasie teologie as 'n kommunikasiewyse in godsdienstige kultuurgebiede is die mees onlangse en merkwaardigste metodologie wat aangewend kan word om ruimte te skep vir wedersydse getuigenis en dialoog rakende idees aangaande en die praktyke voorouerlike rituele onder Suid-Koreaanse en Suid-Afrikaanse Christene. Die doel van hierdie navorsing is om sekere gedigotomiseerde probleme te oorkom wat inherent is in eksklusiewe, inklusiewe en religieus pluralistiese benaderings wat in dialoog is met ander religieuse kulture. In hierdie verband het ons ondersoek ingestel na sekere probleme van die koloniale wyse van sendingwerk en die funksionele oorskakeling van die eksklusivistiese benadering en gemerk dat die inklusiewe benadering ook sy swakheid het deurdat dit die historiesiteit van die onderwerp verswak. Ons het gepoog om aan te dui dat teosentriese en religieus pluralistiese benaderings nie die probleem van onderlinge identiteit oplos nie deur eenvoudig te soek na gemeenskaplikhede tussen religieuse tradisies. Ons rasionaal is dat alhoewel hierdie benaderings hul swakpunte het, behoort ons nie verby hul voordele te kyk nie. By die inskatting van hierdie benaderings word die aandag dus gevestig op hoe hierdie voordele gebruik kan word om die ander aan te vul. Gevolglik het ons 'n betekenisgesentreerde en praktykgerigte kommunikasiemetodologie voorgestel wat 'n holistiese benadering aanwend.

Om 'n betekenisgesentreerde en praktykgerigte kommunikasiemetodologie aan te wend, het ons begin deur die teologiese beginsel van *perichoresis* te aanvaar, wat die innerlike verhouding tussen die lede van die heilige drie eenheid is. *Perichoresis* is die fondament van *missio Dei*, wat die inisiatief verteenwoordig wat God se liefde vir die wêreld in die praktyk is. By wyse van inkarnasionele gee-van-die-self, word *missio Dei* aan die wêreld openbaar. Tweedens het ons *perichoresis* herinterpreteer as 'n interkulturele term en ideologie wat op sy samestellende elemente gebaseer is, naamlik 'n gemeenskaplike woning, gemeenskaplike ruimte en gemeenskaplike identiteit. Die interkulturele betekenis van 'n gemeenskaplike woning is voortdurende gemeenskaplike deurdringing, terwyl die kulturele betekenis van gemeenskaplike ruimte geïnterpreteer word as *die andere*, met ander woorde vanuit die oogpunt van die lediging van hulself in gemeenskaplike kommunikasie, eerder as oorheersing en verplasing. Ons het verder gemeenskaplike identiteit herinterpreteer by wyse van die 'praktyk waarmee'. Gebaseer op hierdie kulturele herinterpretasie van *perichoresis*, het ons 'n praktykgerigte en betekenisgesentreerde model van interkulturele teologie daargestel.

Belangriker nog het die *perichoretiese* model van interkulturasie ons in staat gestel om 'n teologiese en kulturele identiteit van die Christendom op te stel temidde van 'n ontmoeting met andere, wat die 'praktyk waarmee' verteenwoordig. In die besonder het die studie gepoog om die interkulturele kommunikasiemetode toe te pas op die ontmoeting tussen Xhosa-kerke en Koreaanse sendelinge in Khayelitsha in terme van voorouerverwante sake. Deur hierdie interkulturele en vergelykende evaluering van verskuivende identiteite, het ons voorgestel hoe Koreaanse sendelinge en Xhosa-kerke wedersyds teologiese kulturele identiteite kan daarstel.

Vir hierdie doel het ons aanvanklik 'n literatuurstudie onderneem van Koreaanse en Suid-Afrikaanse inheemse teologieë aangaande die aanbidding van voorouers. Daarna het ons 'n empiriese opname in Khayelitsha onderneem om die missiologiese sienings van Koreaanse sendelinge vas te stel in die lig van hul tradisionele godsdienstige agtergrond en die Koreaanse teoloë se verinheemste interpretasie van voorouerlike sake. Ons het ook aandag geskenk aan die teologiese posisies van sommige Westerse sendelinge in Khayelitsha oor dieselfde aangeleentheid. Laastens het ons die identiteite nagevors van die Xhosa-kerke in Khayelitsha op literêre en empiriese vlakke en hoe interkulturele teologie gerekonstrueer kan word om die missiologiese identiteite van Koreaanse sendelinge en Xhosa-kerke te evalueer ingevolge die aanbidding van voorouers.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	III
OPSOMMING	V
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	VII
TABLE OF CONTENTS	VIII
FIGURES	XII
TABLES	XIII
ABBREVIATION	XIII
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background and Research Questions	1
1.2 Hypothesis	3
1.3 Research design and methodology	6
1.4 Contributions of this study	10
1.5 Structure of the study	11
CHAPTER 2 THEOLOGY OF INTERCULTURATION	13
2.1 Introduction	13
2.2 Holistic approach to mission	14
2.2.1 Introduction: <i>missio Dei</i> , <i>perichoresis</i> , and incarnation	14
2.2.2 Meaning of the <i>perichoresis</i>	15
2.2.2.1 Mutual indwelling	16
2.2.2.2 Mutual space	17
2.2.2.3 Mutual identity	19
2.2.3 Theo-historical approach to holistic mission	20
2.2.3.1 <i>Missio Dei</i> in the missionary and ecumenical movements	20
2.3 <i>Perichoresis</i> as parameters of intercultural theology	25
2.3.1 Introduction	25
2.3.2 Mutual indwelling	25
2.3.2.1 Introduction: Dynamic communication	25
2.3.2.2 Foundation of dynamic communication	26
2.3.2.3 Culture versus culture mode	27
2.3.2.3.1 Problems of the Culture versus Gospel mode	28
2.3.2.3.2 Weakness culture versus culture mode	32
2.3.2.3.3 Foundation of culture versus culture mode	33
2.3.3 Mutual space	38

2.3.3.1 Introduction	38
2.3.3.2 Theories of mutual space	39
2.3.3.3 Intercultural communication in mutual space	43
2.3.3.3.1 Characters of intercultural communication	44
2.3.3.3.1.1 Mutual subjective of intercultural communication	44
2.3.3.3.1.2 Dynamic nature of intercultural and inter-religious communication	47
2.3.3.3.1.3 Contextual nature of intercultural communication - existential determination	53
2.3.4 Mutual identity	56
2.3.4.1 Introduction	56
2.3.4.2 The uniqueness of incarnation and the challenges of theocentric religious pluralism	56
2.3.4.3 Christocentric approaches	60
2.3.4.4 Holistic approach to mutual identity	64
2.4 Conclusion	68
 CHAPTER 3 WITNESS IN KOREA	 69
3.1 Introduction	69
3.2 Overview of Korea	70
3.2.1 Korean worldview	70
3.2.1.1 Integral view	70
3.2.1.2 Past-oriented view of time	71
3.2.1.3 View of after death	72
3.2.1.4 Shamanism	73
3.2.2 Ancestor matters in Korea	74
3.2.2.1 Confucianism and ancestor matter	76
3.2.2.1.1 Historical understanding of Catholic attitude to ancestor matter	76
3.2.2.1.2 View of the Western protestant missionaries on ancestor worship	77
3.2.2.1.3 Understanding of Korean Church on ancestor matters	80
3.3 Indigenous approach in Korean local theologies - Theological approach	83
3.3.1 Catholic model of holistic approach	84
3.3.1.1 Chong Yag-yong as a practical scholar	84
3.3.1.2 Chong Yag-yong's view of the Great Ultimate and filial duty	85
3.3.2 Recent indigenous understanding of Korean theologies	87
3.3.2.1 <i>Pung-Ryu</i> Theology of Ryu Tong-shik as dialogue with Shamanism	87
3.3.2.1.1 Background of the indigenisation idea of Ryu Tong-shik	87
3.3.2.1.2 Shamanistic culture and Christianity	89
3.3.2.1.3 <i>Pung-Ryu</i> Theology	90
3.3.2.1.4 Filial duty and <i>Pung-Ryu</i> theology	92
3.3.2.2 Theology of <i>sung</i> of Yun Sung-bum as dialogue with Confucianism	94

3.3.2.2.1 Indigenous theology of Yun Sung-bum	94
3.3.2.2.2 Confucian culture and Christianity - the theology of <i>sung</i>	96
3.3.2.2.3 Filial duty and the theology of <i>sung</i>	96
3.4 Intercultural hermeneutics of ancestor matters in Korea	97
3.4.1 <i>Perichoretic</i> evaluation of ancestor matters in Korea	99
3.4.1.1 Mutual indwelling	99
3.4.1.1.1 Mutual penetration in Korean ancestor matters	99
3.4.1.1.2 Exclusivistic and functional structure in indigenisation theology in Korea	100
3.4.1.1.3 Mutual indwelling and ancestor matters	104
3.4.1.2 Mutual space and ancestor matters	106
3.4.1.2.1 Mutual subjectivity and ancestor matters	108
3.4.1.2.2 Dynamic nature and ancestor matters	113
3.4.1.2.3 Contextuality and ancestor matters	117
3.4.1.3 Mutual identity	119
3.4.1.3.1 Meaning of mutual identity in ancestor matters	119
3.4.1.3.2 Theocentric approach to securing identity in ancestor matters	120
3.4.1.3.3 Christocentric approach to securing identity in ancestor matters	121
3.5 Conclusion: Holistic approach	123
 CHAPTER 4 ANCESTORS IN DREAMS AND THE XHOSA WITNESSES	125
4.1 Introduction	125
4.2 Ancestors in dream - a basic research on Xhosa Christians	126
4.2.1 Demographic setting	126
4.2.2 Religious ideology and ancestors of amaXhosa	127
4.2.2.1 Supreme Being and ancestors	127
4.2.2.2 Ancestor belief (<i>Inkolo yezinyanya</i>)	130
4.2.2.3 Roles of ancestor and ancestral rituals	131
4.2.2.4 Role of diviners or <i>sangomas</i>	133
4.3 Witness of mission Church and response of amaXhosa	134
4.3.1 Introduction	134
4.3.2 Theological views of the Western mission and mission churches on ancestor matters	135
4.3.3 Responses of Xhosa Christians to ancestor matters	145
4.4 Empirical research on amaXhosa in Khayelitsha	150
4.4.1 Introduction and demography of Khayelitsha	150
4.4.2 Evaluation of statistics	153
4.4.2.1 General ideas of ancestor matter	153
4.4.2.2 The church and ancestor matters	160
4.4.2.3 Salvation and culture in ancestor matters	161

4.4.2.4 Indigenisation and ancestor matters.....	164
4.4 Conclusion	167
 CHAPTER 5 ‘NEW HOME’ OF KOREAN MISSIONARIES ?	169
5.1 Introduction	169
5.2 Interview and evaluation of Korean missionaries	170
5.2.1 Mission contents and types of theology	171
5.2.2 Understanding ancestor-related matters (Part One of Questionnaire).....	173
5.2.3 Response to the facts (Part Two of Questionnaire)	180
5.2.4 Response to indigenised approaches and suggestion (Part Three of Questionnaire).....	182
5.3. Conclusion	184
 CHAPTER 6 GENERAL CONCLUSION: “SOUTH TO SOUTH?”	
TOWARDS AN INTERCULTURAL EVALUATION.....	186
6.1 Introduction	186
6.2 <i>Perichoretic</i> communication	188
6.2.1 Introduction	188
6.2.2 Mutual indwelling in the Xhosa context.....	189
6.2.3 Mutual space.....	191
6.2.3.1 Mutual subjectivity and ancestor matter in Xhosa context	192
6.2.3.2 Dynamic nature and <i>ubuntu</i>	196
6.2.3.3 Contextuality through <i>ubuntu</i>	199
6.2.4 Mutual identity	202
6.2.4.1 Critical approach of Christocentric inclusivism	203
6.2.4.2 Holistic understanding of mutual identity in Xhosa ancestral matters	207
 APPENDIX 1 RESEARCH AREA MAP.....	209
APPENDIX 2 QUESTIONNAIRES.....	210
APPENDIX 3 EMPIRICAL SURVEY RESULTS.....	218
APPENDIX 4 INTERVIEW OF KOREAN MISSIONARIES	224
BIBLIOGRAPHY	240

FIGURES

fig. 1 Intercultural communication model	6
fig. 2 The Structure of <i>Pung-Ryudo</i>	92
fig. 3 Survey of denominational rate (%)	151
fig. 4 Que.1-2 (%)	
fig. 5 Denominational Que.1-3	153
fig. 6 Denominational Que 1-4	
fig. 7 Denominational Que 1-5	155
fig. 8 Que 1-5	
fig. 9 Denominational Que 1-6	155
fig. 10 Denominational Que 1-7	
fig. 11 Denominational Que 1-8	156
fig. 12 Denominational Que 1-9	157
fig. 13 Que 1-10-2 Reason for performing rituals.....	158
fig. 14 Que 1-11 After death	
fig. 15 Denominational Que 1-11/ go to heaven or hell	159
fig. 16 Denominational Que 1-11/ living dead	
fig. 17 Denominational Que 1-11/ become god	159
fig. 18 Que.2-1 Ancestor worship allowed in church	
fig. 19 Que.2-3 Experience confliction in church	161
fig. 20 Denominational Que.3-1	161
fig. 21 Denominational Que.3-2	163
fig. 22 Denominational Que.3-3	163
fig. 23 Denominational Que.3-4	164
fig. 24 Denominational Que. 4-1	165
fig. 25 Que.4-4 Expectations through ancestor worship.....	165
fig. 26 Missionary/mission church influence Que. 4-7	167

TABLES

table 1. Empirical Research Limitation	9
table 2. The commonality between memorial services of Christianity and ancestral ritual of Confucianism	109

ABBREVIATIONS

IMC: The International Missionary Council

CWME: The World Council of Churches Commission on World Mission and Evangelism

WCC: The World Council of Church

LCWE: The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization

YMCA: The Young Men Christian Association

URDR: Unit for Religion and Development Research of the Faculty of Theology at the
University of Stellenbosch

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Research Questions

The movement of Korean missionaries and other ‘cross-cultural’ witnesses from ‘South’ (South Korea) to ‘South’ (South Africa¹) has been an interesting development in the past few decades. In the encounters with Xhosa people - Christians of various churches and adherents of Xhosa traditional religion and spiritualities - the idea of ancestors and ancestral rituals is recurrent.² It is inevitable that the encounters will lead to remembering and recounting of particular, common and different historical ideas about, and experiences with ancestral issues in Korea.³ The encounters in South Africa can create a shared space for understanding the interactions, particularly when viewed in the light of past shifting ideas, attitudes and approaches to ancestors, as an integral dimension of traditional cultures and their worldviews. Investigating expressions of these encounters in both Korean Christianity and African Christianity, the various ideas, controversies and conflicts around ancestors (including all ceremonies and rituals associated with ancestors) should be understood within specific cultures and their impact on the relations between Christian witnesses and the adherents of traditional religions.

South Korean Christianity has encountered various features of traditional cultural-religious customs, and the early missionaries from the West, and Korean missionaries have borrowed and accepted some of these customs. Some questions arise from this statement thus: How did early missionaries from the West encounter and understand the ancestors in Korean culture? What was

¹ C. H. Jun, the first Korean missionary in South Africa, arrived in Cape Town in 1986. As a missionary of the Korean Harbour Evangelism, he worked mostly in Cape Town harbour and Black township areas near Cape Town. While working there, Jun established the Cape Town branch of the ‘Korean Harbour Evangelism’, which accelerated the Korean mission movement in South Africa. Eleven Korean missionaries are currently (2007) working among the amaXhosa in Khayelitsha of Cape Town, which is the target area of this research.

² As Theron puts it, “Especially ancestor practice is central to understanding African worldview and Philosophy, as well as the African’s normal life. Even those among them who are Christians may offer sacrifices or pray to ancestors, many still believe that the ancestors can influence their lives, for example by appearing to them in dreams, and they still remember their ancestors with respect and affection” (Theron 1996:11).

³ The exclusivist, inclusivist, and pluralist perspectives have informed missionaries’ theological and cultural orientation and attitudes towards other cultures and religions. We shall study ideas and attitudes of missionaries who worked in South Korea and South Africa, and those of some theologians writing from an intercultural theological perspective as outlined in this proposal (see section on methodology).

their theological motivation and what were the specific controversies? One suggestion is that “the general attitude of missionaries from three countries, the United States, Australia and Canada, was mainly exclusivistic⁴ in dealing with ancestral rituals within Korean traditional customs” (Min K.B 1987:32; The Institute of Korean Church History Studies 1989:250). Additionally, Song (1987:61-4) shows that “their aim was to build Westernised Christendom in Korea”. For Ryu T.S (1987:106-9), “some of the missionaries viewed the ancestor matter favourably”. Since the first era of the Christian mission in Korea,⁵ missionaries encountered Confucianism, which comprised of distinctive cultural, religious and social features in integral form. How then did indigenous Korean Christians respond to the missionaries’ ideas and deeds on encountering their own traditional religious culture, specifically in the matter of ancestor? There are conflicting indigenous interpretations of the ancestor issue in Korean Christianity, each based on various theological stances, which range from exclusivism and inclusivism to pluralistic approaches. This research investigates whether or not early missionaries from the West and some Xhosa Christians have followed a similar pattern in South Africa and how they may have done so.

These comparative perspectives in missiology raise critical questions for Korean Christians who are challenged to move from being ‘cross-cultural’ witnesses from South Korea to *inter*-cultural witnesses in South Africa. When they return to South Korea, are they transformed into *intra*-cultural⁶ witnesses or do they adapt to and integrate with their own context? How can witnesses from South Korea and those in South Africa interact from their intercultural and intracultural perspectives when they encounter the diverse expressions of the ancestral dimension in their own traditional religious cultures? To the Korean missionaries who transverse international and cross ethnic borders by moving from the “South” to the “South,” what role do the shifting ideas about, and experiences of dialogue play in post-apartheid South Africa? How do Korean witnesses

⁴ ‘*The truth of God* (*샅테 쥔 리*)’ published in 1891, contains ideas of early missionaries toward traditional religion of Korea. The idea of this book was crucially, exclusivistic to ancestral rituals.

⁵ The first missionary from the West was H.N. Allen who was involved in the Presbyterian Church in the United States. After he arrived in Korea in 1884 (Baek 1985:102), five major mission stations from three countries were built up until 1910 (cf. *The institute of Korean Church history studies* 1989: 216-7).

⁶ Presently, Christian theology wants to find ways of embracing both the global and the local, which cannot be defined simply in territorial terms (Schreiter 1997:13-7). ‘Intercultural and intracultural’ communication is to overcome the limits of inculturation which focuses one-way communication (Bosch 1991:455). The term ‘intercultural and intracultural’ stresses the point that real communication is never a one-way exercise. Intercultural communication is a process in which, successful communication influences not only the hearer or the receiver, but also the communicator or the sender (Kritzing 1994:132). The premise for this is the idea that “there is no eternal theology, no *theologia perennis*, which may play the referee over local theologies. We are beginning to realize that all theologies, including those in the West, need one another, they influence, challenge, enrich and invigorate each other” (Bosch 455-7).

relate to and enter the emerging dialogical space where they can look holistically at the important features of traditional religious cultures? Would a holistic and contextual approach help both the Korean and Xhosa witnesses with an intercultural and intracultural critique of how their respective motivations, moulded within a specific era, have possibly shaped their missiological positions, attitudes, responses and approaches to the ancestral dimension?

Recently, leading theologians seem to follow the ‘classical’ or traditional approaches. A good example is Race’s (1983:10-104) assortment of exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism, contained in his book *Christians and Religious Pluralism: Patterns in the Christian Theology of Religions* (Race 1983). Before Race, Schineller categorised theological attitudes about the finality of Jesus as, ecclesiocentric universe or exclusive Christology; Christocentric universe or inclusive Christology; theocentric universe or normative Christology; and theocentric universe or non-normative Christology (Schineller 1976:545-66).⁷ However, rather than follow these traditional approaches, we shall deal with matters of theological and cultural identity in the context of the *praxis of ‘with’* between the ‘subject’ and the ‘other’ in mutual space. We shall explain these terminologies and the premise for our proposal below.

1.2 Hypothesis

Instead of the broad typologies of exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism, which are often used in comparative religion, missiology, and ecumenics, the missional hermeneutics of *missio Dei* as *perichoresis* reconstructs intercultural theology to evaluate intercultural and interreligious discourse and encounters with regard to ancestors in South Korea and South Africa.

As it creatively builds its theological and cultural perspectives and premises, the proposed intercultural theology evaluates:

- 1) The extent to which some of the missionaries and theologians of Korea and South Africa have adjusted and even changed their ideas about and approaches to ancestors and ancestral rituals;
- 2) How *theological and cultural identities of witnesses* of South Korea and South Africa can be (re)constructed in the process.

⁷ See other theologians who have accepted Race’s classification, but have other ideas, in D’Costa (1986).

As an applied missiological study of the most current ideas and *praxes*, intercultural theology

- 1) Evaluates some of the most current ideas of Xhosa Christianity in terms of ancestor, and of Korean 'cross-cultural' missionaries in South Africa;
- 2) Evaluates whether or not the theological and cultural identities of both witnesses in terms of ancestor matter are continuously shifting, and if so, how;
- 3) Indicates where and how the transformation of the ideas and identities (Rom. 12:1-3) of Korean missionaries in Khayelitsha can occur, namely by meeting others at specific moments of their journeys and opening mutual spaces for witness and dialogue.

It can be stated here that intercultural theology challenges and goes beyond the broad and general perspectives of the classical approaches. First, existing mission theologies assume 'poles apart' attitudes, either by focusing on the personal identity of the subject, or by stressing the importance of the other in the opening of mutual space in dialogue. The matter began with the forfeiture of the subject, which happens to be the blind spot of modern philosophies, and it is worth noting that the crusadic or colonial mission was influenced by the loss of the subject. Among these theologies, we observe that the theological dichotomy in the intracultural phase puts too much stress on local theologies and on the loss of the identity of the subject in the intercultural phase on the pretext of dialogue. After all, we observe that intercultural theology is the way to overcome the old theological dichotomies, and mutual learning became an important concept in this alternative strategy. However, as academic theories, the concepts of mutual learning and mutual equivalence offer no clear directions or suggestions for the future.

Second, the core of this matter is that the classical approaches just focus on the balance between the subject and the other, without being interested in the mutual space. Mutual space is the degradation space, which moulds through the dynamic *praxis* of serving and sacrifice. However, academic theories cannot guarantee the genuineness of the communication held in the mutual space, but only communication in *praxis*, which is opened through incarnational life in the mutual space, can be regarded as genuine. The authentic concern has to be toward the 'with' of the mutual side in the mutual space, not toward the *subject* and the other itself. The problem is that when we consider the notion of 'with the other', the focus is on embracing the personal value associated with the *subject*. This 'with' is formed when the *subject* meets the other in the mutual space with his⁸ entire incarnational life. Why is the concern for the 'with' considered

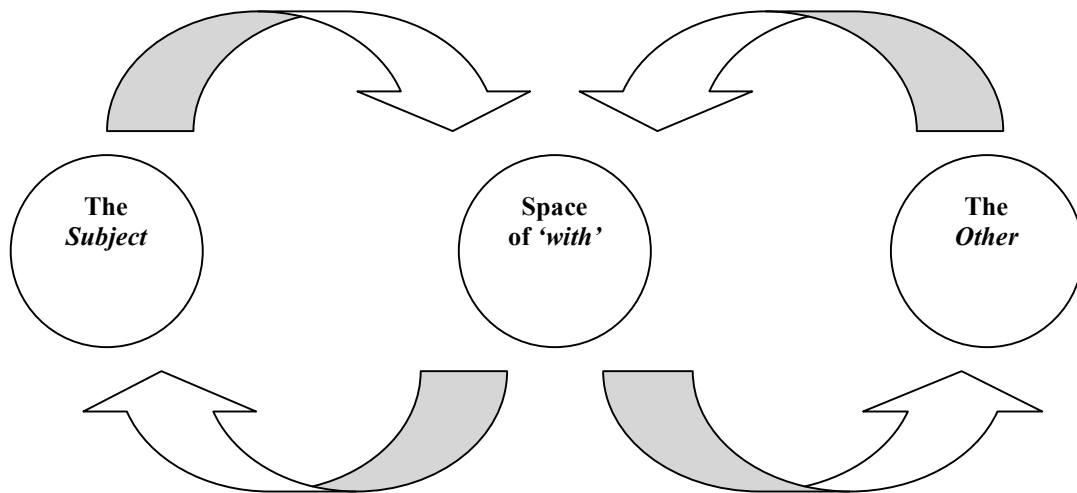
⁸ The third person masculine pronouns he/his/him shall be used generically throughout this study. This is

important?

The answer could be found in the third premise. If we consider mutual space as personal space, the ‘*with*’ commands the *subject* to return to his context and place (*Sitz-im-Leben*) after the encounter with the other. In other words, the *subject* encounters the personal *other* in mutual space, escapes from the missional way which he is addicted to, and makes mutual space meaningful through incarnational life. However, the authentic identity of the *subject* is realised when his uncompleted identity meets the other through the communication of devotion, and returns to his context and place. With this, they can then share in the core of the identity of the *perichoretic* relation of the divine Trinity, which is love. What this means is that, to recognise the authentic identity is not *a priori*, but *a posteriori*.

Furthermore, the self-identity, which is discovered through an encounter with the other, is in a dynamic process toward perfection. In other words, the *subject*, who finds his imperfection and authentic identity, love, through the encounter with the other in mutual space, experiences the repeated *praxis*, which is made by the calling of ‘*with*’. This calling is an attraction toward mutual space, which needs the devotion of the subject. We shall here refer to this repeated *praxis* as the intercultural communication of ‘*with*’. After all, the context and place of the *subject* is nothing other than the context and place of imperfection. The *subject* does not find his identity until he arrives at the encounter phase with the other. This is achieved through the incarnational life (*praxis* of devotion) in the mutual space where he repeatedly discovers the authentic identity at the commandment of ‘*with*’. Therefore, the core of this identity is incarnational love and the one who commends us to this space of ‘*with*’ or mutual space is the Holy Spirit. Coakley (2001:209) asserts that, “this respectful space-making mirrors the dialectical gap in the divine which von Balthasar sees only as bridgeable by the Holy Spirit.”

for convenience and not because of gender discrimination.



**fig. 1 Intercultural communication model
of
*Praxis of 'with'***

Shaw and van Engen propose the spiralling process of missiological hermeneutics, focusing on the continual interaction between the divine level and the human level. For them, this spiral mutual encountering finally converges encounters to *praxis*-oriented dialogue (cf. Shaw & van Engen 2003:80-2). This process is the same with the incarnational way - that Jesus devoted and emptied himself in the mutual space. Devotion in the mutual space implies that, we are not 'for' the other, but '*with*' the *other*, the Christian mission as dialogue is life '*with*' the *other*.

1.3 Research design and methodology

In order to focus on both the theoretical and *praxis* dimensions of the intercultural theological framework, this research is a combination of a literature and an empirical (questionnaires and interviews) study.

For the literature study, we have re-designed a missiological norm of inter-culturation, and intra-culturation based on a holistic approach to mission. In this regard, intercultural missiology describes modes of encounters between Christianity and other cultures, a mode for inter-transforming of mutual cultures and a mode for inter-transcendence, in which Christianity as a culture constructs its distinctive theological and cultural identity encountering the other culture through mutual transforming. As Bosch indicates, intercultural theology is considered as overcoming old geographic and theological dichotomies (cf. Bosch 1991:456). These

dichotomies are closely related to a “globalisation and ecclesiological and theological awakening in the Third World” (Küster 2003:173-4). Interculturation is a request for liberation from Western regime in theology and it is concerned with the *theologies* of local churches, and the dynamic relations between mutual cultures. In addition, the inter-religious phase demands for mutual dialogue in multi-faith situations to enable the participants live together.

However, the problem is that interculturation as a theoretical framework has two dangerous points in mutual dialogue. First, local theologies and their local religious cultures, are overemphasised in such a way that they become, (in the words of Bosch), “too local” (Bosch 1991:456). He remarks that in this case, local churches may be “tempted to over-celebrate an infinite number of differences in the emergence of pluralistic local theologies” (:456). This may usher in theological and cultural difficulties and identity conflict between mutual churches or cultures. The other problem is that basically, interculturation theology as a dialogue is a “common search for truth” (Küster 2003:183). Even if intercultural hermeneutics looks at others to discover a way of dialogical pluralism first and then accepts the other in his difference, intercultural dialogue as comparative theology asks for commonality. Cobb (1990c:81) explains that, “the uniqueness that is rejected is any claim that Christianity achieves something fundamentally different from other religions”. As Cobb indicates, the reason why one religion is recognised as true religion is that it has peculiarity. This peculiarity is completely different from other religious traditions. In this regard, Sundermeier (1986:98) suggests that there is a creative tension of the “unity within reconciled diversity”.

Thus, as a hermeneutical tool of intercultural theology, it is suggested that *perichoresis* be applied to solve these matters of geographic and theological “old dichotomies”. In this context therefore, *perichoresis* is re-interpreted as theological and cultural languages in mutual indwelling, mutual space, and mutual identity to find theological and cultural identity of witnesses of South Africa and South Korea. *Perichoresis* is a term, which indicates the dynamic inner relation of the Divine Trinity. Similarly, incarnational love as a basis for the inner relation of *perichoresis* is expressed as *missio Dei*. The creative tension of this inner relation also includes theological and cultural tensions when the gospel is incarnated to the world.

Moreover, as a theological hermeneutics, *perichoresis* opens how we can interpret intercultural and intracultural dialogues and alternatively overcome theological barriers. Specifically, through *perichoresis*, we open up the detailed meanings of the contents of intercultural, and intra-

culturation in terms of religious cultural encounter between Xhosa churches and South Korean missionaries who are working amongst them. While it aims to overcome exclusivistic, inclusive, and pluralistic dilemma to religious cultural dialogue, it also aims to re-interpret and build up intercultural theology. *Perichoresis* also re-interprets cultural languages. *Perichoresis*, as cultural contents, evaluates a cultural encountering of the witnesses of South Korea and South Africa in terms of ancestral matters. Cultural contents include the ideas of indigenisation, ancestor worship, shamanism, worldviews, etc.

The empirical part (questionnaire) of the study investigates the current ideas of Xhosa Christians and of Korean missionaries working in Khayelitsha on ancestral issues. The surveys of Pauw (1960:6; East London district) and West (1975; Soweto district) on ancestral matters shows that most Xhosa people adhere to ancestor worship (Pauw 1975:141; West 1975:189-206).⁹ According to the surveys, the majority of the people, including those who live in townships, still adhere to ancestor worship,¹⁰ even if “in the urban area the practice of the ancestor cult occurs less frequently mainly because the families and extended families dispersed” (Daneel 1973:55). Nevertheless, this data might not be up-to-date, specifically because the Khayelitsha area has not yet been surveyed concerning this topic since it was built in 1983.¹¹ This is the main purpose behind this current survey.

There are three main reasons for selecting this area for a sample survey. The first concerns the population density and the percentage of Xhosa people in this area. The population density of the amaXhosa in this area is 96.8% of the whole population of Khayelitsha, which is approximately 500,000 people. Second, the majority of South Korean missionaries working among the amaXhosa are found in this area. Eleven South Korean missionaries are currently working in Khayelitsha with diverse mission projects. The third reason is that this researcher has been involved for a number of years with a mission organisation, African Leadership, which works among the amaXhosa.

⁹ West's empirical study was a small scale of empirical survey of that area; he interviewed some people as sample. Linda. L. Thomas' empirical study focused on healing and ancestors in St. John's Church in Gugulethu, which is one of the oldest black townships near Cape Town. Her survey is also limited to only one church. See her book, *Under the Canopy: Ritual Process and Spiritual Resilience in South Africa*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press. 1999.

¹⁰ The surveys show that 88.9% of urban churches believe in ancestors, 71.7% of them have experience of ancestors' interference, while 90.9% of rural churches believe in them, and 81.8% of them have experience of ancestors.

¹¹ The target area of survey, Khayelitsha is one of the recent black townships around Cape Town, which was built in 1983 as a direct result of apartheid (Telschow 2003:8).

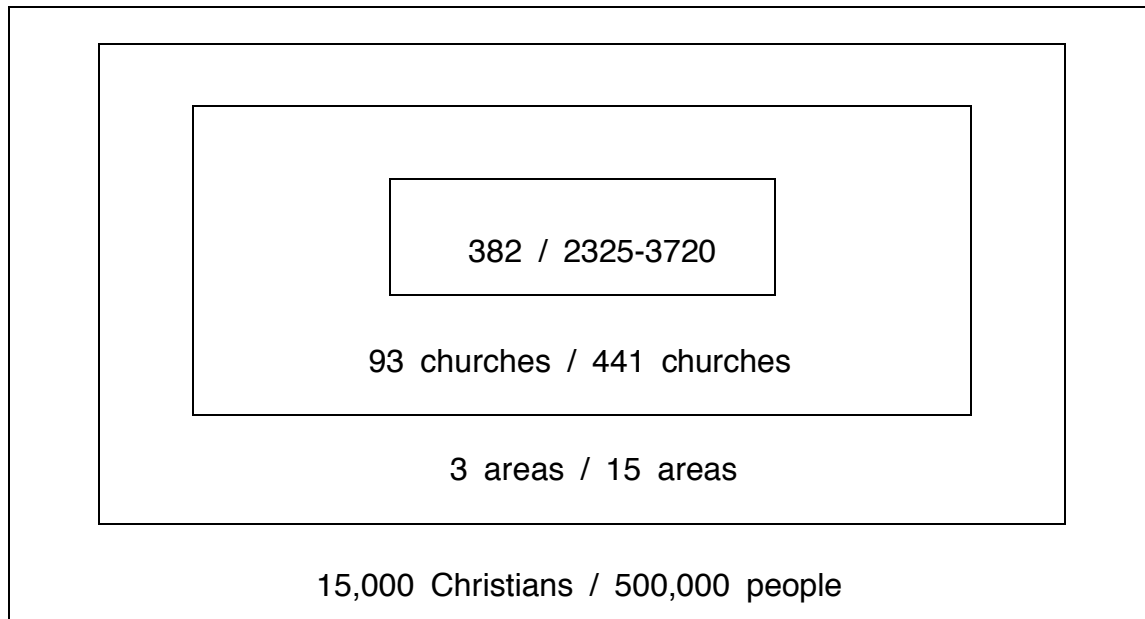


Table 1. Empirical Research Limitation

Concerning the empirical study, there are study limitations. To begin with, there are 15 000 Xhosa Christians in Khayelitsha, representing 3.4% of the town's population of 500,000. This percentage of Christians is based on the definition of who a Christian is. In this context, a Christian is one who is at least 18 years old and attends Sunday services regularly. It should be noted that the church leaders provided the number of their church members to this researcher in the cases investigated in Khayelitsha. Secondly, only three areas are selected out of the 15 areas, which have a total of 443 churches. There are 93 churches in the three areas with an estimated population of 2325 to 3720 Christians. Out of this number, 382 Christians are selected for the study, to arrive at a 95% accuracy required for this research. The setting of the research is limited to the urban area, specifically the Khayelitsha area and because some big sized churches are not included in this research, the result of the research may not be generalized to other areas.

Furthermore, the research was executed with the assistance of a Xhosa translator and the languages used in the survey and the interviews are Xhosa and English. Contact with interviewees was through door-to-door visitations. The researcher first explained the questions on the questionnaire and the respondents answered. The 2007 investigation materials used in the empirical research were obtained from African Leadership, a Korean missionary organisation based in Khayelitsha. Information from respondents was recorded in audio and written forms. Most of the respondents answered in Xhosa and the responses were translated by the Xhosa

translator before they were used as research material. Additionally, the survey took into consideration issues of gender, denomination, age group, and baptism to determine how long a respondent's involvement in the church has been. These materials are data-based and were calculated using the File Maker computer program.

In addition, another empirical study was conducted among Korean missionaries to evaluate their theological and cultural identity in terms of ancestral matters. Nine Korean missionaries were interviewed face-to-face using printed questionnaires that were designed in three parts. The first section deals with Korean missionaries' knowledge about ancestor related questions, including knowledge of the relationship between the Supreme Being and Xhosa ancestors, Christology, stance on life after death, soteriology, the meaning of ancestor worship, ways of making contact with ancestors, rituals for ancestors, roles of ancestors, mediatorship of ancestors, roles of *Sangoma*¹² in churches. The second part of the interview is to survey the reactions of Korean missionaries, after understanding the given facts in each question, which are based on literature and empirical study. The final part is designed to inquire about their experience of counselling or conflict with Xhosa people and their own indigenous views concerning ancestral matters.

1.4 Contributions of this study

Some anticipated contributions of this study are listed below:

- 1) *Perichoresis*, which is originally the inner relation of the Divine Trinity and their existing mode, is (re)interpreted and (re)constructed as an intercultural hermeneutics in terms of "missiology, ecumenics and comparative religion" (Küster 2003:171). To overcome the weaknesses and "old dichotomies" (Bosch 1991:456) of classical classification between inclusive, exclusive, and religious pluralism, *perichoresis* is subdivided in three ways, namely, mutual indwelling, mutual space, and mutual identity. *Perichoretic* hermeneutics also interprets the relationship between *missio Dei* and *praxis*.
- 2) Through *perichoretic* hermeneutics, intercultural theology is defined as '*praxis of with*.' Ordinarily, a "*praxis* model is closely associated with the theology of liberation" (Bevans 1992:66). Therefore, the limitation of this model is that it understands culture in terms of social change, as exemplified by Black theology in South Africa, *Minjung* theology in Korea and Feminists theologies. In this regard, '*praxis of with*' as *perichoretic*

¹² *Sangoma* is the Xhosa word for a diviner or a traditional healer.

hermeneutics aims to construct theological and cultural identity of Christianity with other religious culture and suggests a balanced *praxis* model of holistic approach. It offers an approach to intercultural theology in a holistic way.

3) This dissertation renders an up-to-date empirical account of the situation of Xhosa churches in Khayelitsha regarding ancestors. It is the first empirical study on Xhosa churches in Khayelitsha that evaluates their theological and cultural identities with respect to ancestral matters.

4) It is also the first study to relate the theological and cultural identities of Korean missionaries, working in Khayelitsha, with their encounter and conversation with the identities of Xhosa churches regarding issues of ancestors.

5) Through literature and empirical studies, this research demonstrates how Xhosa churches and Korean missionaries can encounter and shift their theological and cultural identities through intercultural communication. The proposed intercultural hermeneutics, *perichoresis*, can be a model, when Christianity has an encounter with inter, and intracultural witnesses.

1.5 Structure of the study

Chapter 1, the introduction, is comprised of the background, research design and methodology, hypothesis, contributions, and structure of the study.

Chapter 2 reports the study of the hermeneutical basis of holistic mission, which is *perichoresis* and its contents namely, mutual indwelling, mutual space, and mutual identity. This chapter is designed to see how these contents of *perichoresis* can open space for *intercultural*, and *intracultural* communication. The three contents will be re-interpreted in missiological terms.

Chapter 3 debates the religious cultural backgrounds of ancestral matters, which have influenced churches in Korea. This includes Confucianism interwoven with theoretical and even socio-political backgrounds. The theological and cultural identities of the Western missionaries who worked in Korea and their shifting identities and indigenous interpretations are included.

Chapter 4 follows the pattern of Chapter 3 but examines the religio-cultural situation of Xhosa churches on ancestor-related matters. To recognise the theological and cultural identity of Xhosa churches, we studied the witnesses of mission churches and Western missionaries. Through intercultural hermeneutics, we are able to observe a shift in the theological and cultural identity

among Xhosa people as far as ancestral issues are concerned. In order to update research material and to understand the shifting identity of Xhosa churches in post-apartheid era, an evaluation of Xhosa churches in Khayelitsha was carried out.

Chapter 5 is an empirical research of Korean missionaries working among Xhosa people in Khayelitsha and an evaluation of their theological and cultural identity.

Based on the preceding three chapters, Chapter 6 is an assessment of the encounter of Korean missionaries with Xhosa churches in Khayelitsha regarding matters of ancestors. This section follows the intercultural communication principles expounded in Chapter 2, which is the '*praxis of with.*' The chapter is a comparative study based on intercultural hermeneutics of *perichoresis*.

CHAPTER 2

THEOLOGY OF INTERCULTURATION

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we define intercultural theology as *praxis*. Among the many definitions of and the approaches to contextual theology,¹³ the “*praxis* model is more liberal and wedded to a particular context” (Bevans 1992:70). He further suggests that, “each of these models is valid and none can claim its hegemony” (:111). The *praxis* model also has its weakness; it is too locally oriented, and too contextual. It seems the transcendental model can supplement this weakness of the *praxis* model. Pointing out a new way of doing theology, this model suggests that a “turn to the subjective espoused by transcendental method clearly includes a turn to the historical and cultural as genuine theological sources and loci of revelation. And also it emphasises one’s own theologies are shapen and challenged and purified by the other” (:102). This is a kind of mutual penetrating or what Bosch (1991:456) refers to as a theological “osmosis”.

In developing a new method of intercultural theology as *praxis*, which is the ‘*praxis* of *with*’ in this chapter, we have to overcome the dichotomy between the “geographic and the gospel and culture” (Bosch 1991:456-7). The problem of the *praxis* model which is considered as ‘too local’ is that it always meets the stumbling block of geographic dichotomy, while theological and cultural identity of local churches or other religions always connect with the dichotomy of gospel and culture. Consequently, our proposal here is the application of *perichoresis* as an intercultural hermeneutics. In concrete terms, this is an attempt to construct theological and cultural identities of witnesses holistically on the hermeneutical base of mutual indwelling, mutual space, and mutual identity, which are the images of *perichoresis* revealed in the inner relationship within the Divine Trinity.

The main argument of this chapter is how to open mutual space without losing the theological and cultural identity of witnesses, and to examine the premises for such a dialogue in the mutual space for Christians, who are living in the inter, and intracultural encountering phase. The first

¹³ Bevans categorises contextual theology as translation model, anthropological model, praxis model, synthetic model and transcendental model (1992).

step is to understand intercultural theology as a holistic mission approach. It is about how *perichoresis* as a holistic hermeneutics of ‘*praxis of with*’ can be interpreted in cultural terms. In other words, the study is about how mutual indwelling, mutual space, and mutual identity are interpreted in intercultural theology. The next step is to study *perichoresis*, as a theological content, as a cultural content, and as an appropriate *praxis of missio Dei*. In interpreting each of the components, namely, mutual dwelling, mutual space, and mutual identity, we expect to construct the theological and the cultural identity of Christianity as intercultural, and intracultural encounter. Mutual indwelling is about an epistemological premise for the attitude of Christianity toward the other religious culture, while mutual space deals with the methodological aspect of how Christianity encounters the other culture in particular. Lastly, mutual identity shows how authentic theological and cultural identity of Christianity as intercultural witness is revealed.

At this point, we shall turn to the holistic meaning of *perichoresis*, and its interpreted theological and cultural meaning as a methodology for holistic interpretation of interculturalization.

2.2 Holistic approach to mission

2.2.1 Introduction: *missio Dei*, *perichoresis*, and incarnation

We suggest that the *perichoretic* relationship of the Divine Trinity can support the hermeneutical basis for the holistic mission approach. The *perichoresis*, inner relationship of the Divine Trinity used to be re-interpreted for theologians in modern ways. *Perichoresis* is a theological foundation of *missio Dei*. After Barth articulated mission as an activity of God himself (cf. Bosch 1991:388-9), *missio Dei* has been recognised as God’s initiative in mission, or in the words of Trinitarian theologians, God is recognised as a “missionary God” (cf. Holmes 2006:79-82). As Holmes indicates, “God is missionary” in nature (:82). Again, Daugherty (2007:152) remarks that, “God’s being on mission has implication for the practice (*praxis*) of Christian mission”. It is worth noting that the inner nature of the inner relation among the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is mission. Therefore, through the imperative of Jesus, who declares, “As the father has sent me, so I send you,” we realise that “Jesus is here is reflecting on the eternal inner-triune relationships of love which Father, Son and Spirit, and in which the church is called to participate” (Holmes :82). While we speak of *perichoresis* as an inner foundation of *missio Dei*, which is the initiative of expression of love of Trinity God, *missio Dei* is revealed through the

incarnation of Jesus.

Furthermore, the *perichoretic* way of mission in terms of God's initiative (*missio Dei*) through incarnation can be summarised in three ways. Firstly, the case of Moltmann can be cited; "he opposed all kind of the monistic structures, which includes dominating organisms of culture using *perichoretic* relationship among the Divine Trinity" (Kim M.Y 2004:70). Secondly, *perichoresis* is not static but dynamic, and not ontological but relational. When the inner relationship of the Divine Trinity, *perichoresis*, is revealed in the world through the incarnation, which is the *praxis* of the love of God, then the gospel becomes the powerhouse of truth. Finally, in holistic meaning, the hermeneutics of *perichoresis* is in relationship with faith, knowledge, and *praxis*. Yun C.H (2004:175) claims:

"*Praxis* is not simply an application of theory or a conduct of faith. As same as a faith and knowledge require *praxis*, faith and knowledge is verified, corrected and actualised by *praxis*. *Praxis* itself is an ability of transformation. We can reach to the truth and faith through *praxis*. If we follow the model of the *perichoresis*, then for the first time we can experience the image of *perichoresis*."

A research of the meaning of the term itself and its derivative meanings helps us to develop a way of making contact with interculturalisation as a mission paradigm as well as the hermeneutical authority through the *perichoretic* inner relationship of the Divine Trinity.

2.2.2 Meaning of the *perichoresis*

This term, *perichoresis* was initially translated from the Latin *circumincession* and *circuminsessio*. It is rendered in Latin theology as *circumincessio*, which is an equal dynamic process of one thing interweaving with others. It is traditionally rendered in English by the more static "co-inherence of the three Persons in the one eternal God" (Hebblewaite 1977:255). Following Deneffe, Moltmann also observes that the "meaning of *circumincessio* as a dynamic interpenetration (*incedere*), *circuminscessio* as a lasting and resting mutual indwelling (*insedere*)" (Meeks 2000:114). Prestige (1964:291) notes that "Pseudo-Cyril first used the term in connection with the Trinity" and Moltmann (2000:113) observes that, "Gregory of Nanzianzus used this word theologically, and John of Damascus adopted *perichoresis* the key word in his doctrine of the Trinity". Joseph Pohle surmises that "*perichoresis* in the Godhead

originates in the unity of the Divine essence, and it consists in this, that one Person cannot be divided or separated from another, but they mutually exist in one another without confusion and without to the distinction between them” (Pohle 1950:283). This is a theological term used to express the mutual interpenetration of the three Persons of the Trinity. It denotes that each Person is ‘in’ the others (Gaybba 1987:143). Harrison (1991:54) adds that the meaning of this word is “a complete mutual interpenetration of two substances that preserves the identity and properties of each intact”. Butin (1995:161) also uses the term *perichoresis* to understand “the unity of the three Persons that focuses on the mutual indwelling or in-existence, their intimate interrelationship, and their interacting cooperation”. On his part, Lawler (1995:49) stresses the “dynamic process of making room for another around oneself”. Moltmann developed this term in Greek and regarded it as having a double meaning: “movement and rest” (cit., in 2000:49). He got the same result from searching the Greek noun, *perichoresis* and the verb forms, *perichoreo* and *perichoreuo*:

Combined, these express both mutual resting in one another and dancing round with one another. In the eternal life of the Trinity there are simultaneously absolute silence and total whirlwind, just like the eye of hurricane...the very special suggestion of *perichoresis* is that the Divine Persons are habitable for one another, giving one another open life-space for their mutual indwelling (Moltmann 2000:114).

From the theologian’s viewpoint, the term *perichoresis* could be summarised in three notions: mutual indwelling, mutual space, and mutual identity.

2.2.2.1 Mutual indwelling

The meaning of mutual indwelling is that “the unity of the Persons of the Divine Trinity is not static” but dynamic (Kim E.H. 2000:261). The Father pours into the son, the son into the Father, and so on. That something is given to the other member of the Trinity is defined based upon “a dynamic relationship with the other two” (LaCugna 1991:270). It also reveals a dynamic oneness that the unity of spirit may exist between people bound together closely in love. In the gospel of John, “I am in the Father and the Father is in me” (Jn. 14:10) indicates that they are not one subject, but one in singular unity. The Council of Florence (1438-45) declared, “The three Persons are one God not three Gods, because they share one substance, one essence, one nature, one divinity, one immensity, one everything where there is no opposition of relation. Because of this unity, the Father is entirely in the Father, entirely in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit is

entirely in the Father, entirely in the Son” (quoted in Lawler 1995:52). They exist “in” the other, as Moltmann (2000:114-5) mentioned, they indwell rest, and dance “in” one another, and that is to say, they are keeping their “oneness” “in” the mutual resting and dancing. It makes some space for the holistic dimension of mission. The mutual-relationship in indwelling of the Divine Trinity is a dynamic connection sustained with mutual love. They are continually penetrating each other for oneness and this unity in the Divine Trinity exists in the community of the Divine Persons. As John declares, “Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him” (1 Jn. 4:16b), the *perichoretic* community with God is a world-open community.

Holistic mission is a mission theology, which interprets the world in the *perichoretic* and broad sense, but opposes all monistic ideas in all relationship of the world. Individuals cannot exist alone; they cannot refer to salvation outside the communal relationship with the world around them. This *perichoretic* relationship opens new dimension of culture, that awakening that no culture in the plural world can exist without the relationship with others. In a holistic sense, we need to be reminded that Christianity penetrates into the other culture and community and indwells them in the *perichoretic* relationship of divine Trinity.

2.2.2.2 Mutual space

The *perichoretic* community can also be seen as a “kenotic community” (Moltmann 2000:115). The key concept of kenosis, self-emptying, means God’s self-limitation of His Divine infinity in order to make room for the finite human being. Polkinghorne (2001:xii) observes that, “Hans Urs von Balthasar located the kenosis within the inner life of Trinity”. Therefore, the Divine Persons of Trinity are emptying themselves into one another, creating mutual space. The meaning of mutual space is contained in this idea: “Through mutual indwelling, the Divine Persons are giving each other themselves and the Divine life in selfless love” (Moltmann 2000:115). The foundation of their openness and surrender and of sharing their rooms comes from mutual love of the Divine Trinity. Moreover, “the Divine Trinity is ‘open’ not because it is imperfect, but by virtue of the graciously overflowing love; open for all the beloved creatures” (:118). This is just like the incarnation of Jesus Christ, who emptied His place and made space in the kingdom of God for human beings: “Who, being in very nature of God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing...being made “in” human likeness” (Php. 2: 6-7). The love of God is not coercion; rather, God shows His love in the incarnation and the cross of Jesus. In right relationships (*perichoresis*) between human beings,

they can mutually share knowledge about their counterpart. Barrett (1978: 375) rightly points out:

The repetition of 'I am' in John 10:14, bring out the importance of the new theme of mutual recognition which is introduced in these verses. In this passage, the mutual knowledge between the shepherd and the sheep is analogous to the mutual knowledge which exists between the Father and the son.

Here, there is an 'inter-space (*Zwischen*)' wherein sinful human being and God can share together. Traditionally, the Christian's way of encountering other cultures or religions produced two matrixes of the finite and the infinite. Christians stressed a boundary between the finite and the infinite, designating Christianity as the infinite and the world as the finite. In this understanding of *otherness*, there has been roughly two ways of finding the contact point of the relationship between Christianity and the world.

Firstly, when they are confronted with new cultural speculation, they are concerned with adoption, how theological speculation could become accustomed to the trend of the times. On the other hand, the second way focuses primarily on the peculiar spirit of theology itself, and then focuses critically on the cultural speculations based on the theological stance. While the former stance is weak in that it focuses only on outward homogeneity, the latter embraces dangerous isolationism. In this study, we endorse a moderate position, which is holistic and embraces a critical position toward the world as well as an objective attitude toward Christianity. It is not to integrate the extremities of both the cultural and the Christian-like, but to make room in between a culturally inclined adoption and a universal theology.¹⁴

Christian speculation has focused on the importance of the inter-space, considering the space, which is the world, as a site of incarnation. However, it appears that the Christian mission became Crusaders to encounter the world through the middle and modern era. In other words, the Christian mission has ignored the substantial dimension of faith, and considered this space as

¹⁴ Jung S.H (2004:191-2) summarizes the norm of the interspace in six points:

1) The boundary of space, that is, the interspace becomes the contact point to meet with the *other* as well as ruling as a boundary to confirm own realms. 2) The interspace is not localized to the meaning or interpretation of itself, but has a character of self-identity to which the communicators commit themselves. 3) This interspace is started from a crisis of human being. 4) However, the interspace can also be an alternative plan and the site that the alternative plans actualise. 5) As an alternative plan, the third space is introduced which prevents exclusive dichotomy. 6) The third space (the interspace) has a subjective character.

the object of spreading the 'self-realm' of Christianity, geographically. Holistic mission is an intercultural mission paradigm, which perceives the importance of the inter-space. A distinctive uniqueness exists within the *perichoresis*, in spite of the oneness in the relationship of the *perichoresis* of the Divine Trinity. This is the reason why there is inter-space within the Trinity. The question that remains to be answered is; what is the nature of the existing space between human beings and God, and between Christians and their fellow human beings? How can Christianity and the other culture create an inter-space and mutually dwell together in an intercultural world?

2.2.2.3 Mutual identity

Although the three Divine Persons are indwelling mutually, they are also distinguished from one another. This mutual identity considers that the "unity of Divine Trinity combines threeness and oneness without reducing the three to one or the one to three, and avoids the dangers of modalism as well as tritheism" (Meeks 2000:117). They do not lose their identity in mutual communication. The reason for this is that "each Person of the Trinity has a consciousness of existence in unique way" (Gaybba 1987:122). For Jesus, that He is known by Father implies that He knows Himself to be known by the Father. In other words, He knows who He is through His relationship with Father. The relationship indicates not only mutual love but also the identity of the lovers. According to Kim E.H (2000:263), "Considering God's being as a communion of life and love; we thus affirm both the love, which exists at the heart of the *perichoretic* union, as well as the sense of identity, which necessarily underlies each Person of the Trinity".

The problematic question for the existing manner of the Divine Trinity in relation to *perichoresis* is always how to find the un-syncretised way in the identity of Trinity in curbing monotheistic challenges. Regarding Christian mission, this question causes solicitude for the syncretism between Christianity and other religious cultures. In dealing with intercultural communication, the question of syncretism should be answered. The main concern of syncretism for intercultural communication is that the identity of Christianity is diluted.

In seeking a solution, it becomes evident that the hermeneutical authority of the holistic mission can be found in the *perichoretic* relationship of the Divine Trinity. As we divide *perichoresis* hermeneutically, it could be read as mutual indwelling, mutual space, and mutual identity. Therefore, our concern is to adopt a holistic hermeneutics for building a theoretical foundation

for the relativity between gospel and culture, and then to examine the intercultural methods that can be used in the mission field.

2.2.3 Theo-historical approach to holistic mission

2.2.3.1 *Missio Dei* in the missionary and ecumenical movements

The big issue here is how *missio Dei*, which is the mission initiative of the Trinity God and revealed in incarnation, is related to the world. For Bevans & Schroeder (2004:287), “God is a community of Father, Son, and Spirit, constantly involved in the world; salvation, human wholeness, is life lived in a community that reflects the community and self-giving that is God” and He is calling people to greater and abundant life in a holistic way. The aim of this section is to trace the theo-historical process of the *missio Dei* in a holistic way.

The holistic approach, introduced by C. Rene Padilla supports a universal dimension or a broader dimension instead of an individual dimension regarding the efficiency of the salvation. Padilla (1986:10-20) claims that:

The broader dimension means that salvation should be understood not only in the relationship between God and individuals but also in the relationship with the world, in which each individual is included. In other words, individuals cannot be considered as isolated beings from the world.

This positive attitude toward the world closely correlates with an attitude toward culture. We can therefore observe how this holistic approach of mission opens the mutual space between Christianity and other religious cultures at the encountering phase.

In modern mission, the holistic approach has a new departure toward the post-modern era with two starting points. The first one comes from an anxiety of conflicts and divisions between the ecumenical and the evangelical camps. The second is a result of self-examination in the dialogue between theologians of both camps, “that is to say, it is all about missiology, ecumenical concern and comparative religion” (Küster 2003:171). To study the holistic approach to modern mission history, theo-historically is nothing more than to pursue the footprints of the inter-replies

between ecumenical and evangelical parties at mission conferences, in terms of the concept of *missio Dei*.

If we begin with the Edinburgh Conference of 1910, the emphasis was on the Kingship of the Christ in describing the purpose of mission as a conversion of unbelievers and the overcoming of other religions. Nevertheless, a social dimension to the gospel was noted, and this dimension was not considered supplementary, but essential for mission. In the words of Bosch (1980:163-4):

...the point of departure was the priestly rather than the royal office of Christ. Mission was the Kingdom's servant in the world... explicitly concerned itself with the social dimension of the gospel, making it clear that was not just a matter of a cheap 'social gospel' but an authentic consequence of God's revelation in Christ. It was not a mere supplement but an essential element in the theological understanding of mission... a 'comprehensive approach' to man in all his relationship was called for.

At the Stockholm Conference of 1925 on Life and Work, it can be noted that mission was not limited to only individual salvation. Hogg (1952:250) claims that: "The gospel of Christ contains a message, not only for the individual soul, but also for the world of social organisation and economic relations in which individuals live". However, these ideas of the ecumenical movement did not contain the whole meaning of the holistic mission, it was influenced by the social gospel. This new insistence on a broader definition of mission became a big issue at the Jerusalem Conference of 1928 and a broader mission concept, which did not separate evangelism and social act was announced. The purpose of mission was described as a preliminary work of the kingdom of God with its footing on the priesthood of the Christ.

Moreover, "in Madras Conference in 1938 Dr. Mott introduced the larger evangelism which contains holistic ideas" (IMC 1928:16-24). In 1947, Whitby confirmed that the primary task of the Church is evangelism; but the holistic aspect was nonetheless understood:

We are pledged to the service of all those who are hungry or destitute or in need: we are pledged to the support of every moment for the removal of injustice and oppression. But we do not conceive these things, good in them, to be the whole of evangelism, since we are conceived that the source of the world's sorrow is spiritual, and that its healing must be spiritual, through the entry of the risen Christ into every part of the life of the world (cit., in Bassham 1979:26).

The Whitby Conference in 1947 confirmed that the social activities arise from God's revelation, which was commended to His church, and did not originate from the secular 'social gospel'. Hartenstein (cit., in Schwarz 1980:179), whose idea of *missio Dei* was taken up by Barth and who distinguished *missio Dei* from *missio ecclesiae*, saw the *missio Dei* not only from an eschatological but also from a soteriological viewpoint, considering the intimate relationship between a prophetic duty and an apostolic witness. In addition, the conference noted that God's message has to be heralded in every social, political, economical and cultural realm of life in all nations, that is, as a re-interpretation of Matthew (28:19): "Make disciples of all nations...teaching them..." The word will be announced not just to individuals but to all nations. The Hartenstein idea of *missio Dei* acted as a model for people such as Padilla, and became a theoretical base for the holistic approach to mission.

Furthermore, Hartenstein also played a key part in Willingen in 1952. Willingen emphasised the intimate relation between *missio Dei* and incarnation. The emphasis on the cross and incarnational mission following God's initiative of mission by Trinitarian theology confirmed *missio Dei* as humbleness. However, Willingen also left room for interpreting a *missio Dei* which excluded the church's involvement from *missio Dei*. This was actualised in Uppsala in 1968. Matthey (2003:580) remarks thus; "And another agenda of 1960s, *missio Dei* theology was intimately linked with one particular and socio-political approach that responded well to some of the main challenges of the time". Consequently, the Uppsala Conference excluded the church from *missio Dei* in a classical way, and in terms of salvation, made humanisation its mission target. This conference accepted Bonhoeffer's '*Die kirche für andere*', re-interpreting shalom (*eirene*), as the Biblical norm. Uppsala was criticised by Beyerhaus and McGavran because it ignored an individual determination of faith and the confidence of redemption, and rendered salvation as humanistic assistance or social participation that was not based upon the biblical doctrine of reconciliation. The *Frankfurter Erklärung* written by Beyerhaus in 1970, claims that the Uppsala conference seems to represent the polarised era of mission. Ultimately, the *Frankfurter Erklärung* could not overcome the horizontal dimension of mission of the Uppsala as it stressed the vertical dimension and became far off from the holistic approach.

Bosch (1991:391) remarks that; "after Willingen, the *missio Dei* concept gradually underwent a modification.¹⁵ The main concern about *missio Dei* was about the scope of it". For, Kramm (1979:210, cit., in Bosch 1991:391), "since God's concern is for the entire world, this should

¹⁵ See. Rosin's paper in 1972, to trace the process.

also be the scope of *missio Dei*. It affects all people in all aspects of their existence. Mission is God's turning to the world in respect of creation, care, redemption and consummation". Subsequently, the endeavour for a holistic understanding appeared at the Lausanne Conference in 1974. Actually, the initial aim of this conference was to criticise The World Council of Churches Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) of Bangkok in 1972-3 (cf. Sider 1977).¹⁶ This stream was initiated by John Stott. He expressed his difference of opinion thus: "I would express myself differently...I now see more clearly that not only the consequences of the commission but the actual commission itself must be understood to include social as well as evangelistic responsibility, unless we are to be guilty of distorting the words of Jesus" (Stott 1975:23). Stott, one of the main speakers, argued that mission has to be understood more holistically by considering evangelism and social activity:

This brings me to the third way of starting the relation between evangelism and social action, which I believe to be the truly Christian one, namely that social action is *a partner of evangelism*. As partners, the two belong to each other and yet are independent of each other (Stott 1975:27).

His understanding of *missio Dei* was a participation of the church with dependence on the incarnational model of the Christ. Closely approaching the ecumenical understanding of mission, his comprehension influenced the evangelical circle to accept a social responsibility of the Church. However, social activity was understood as a partner of evangelism, and could not substitute or change the order of priority.¹⁷ The issue of order of priority was a point of dispute by Padilla and Escobar etc. In this vein, Scherer & Bevans (1992:3-11) note that; "the fifth Nairobi assembly of WCC in 1975 stressed the whole gospel, whole person, whole world and whole church. Moreover this assembly responded to the Lausanne, confessing the importance of personal salvation with a social salvation".

Whereas, after the Lausanne conference Stott had to confront alarming voices from evangelical circle such as, Beyerhaus (1978:11) and Peter (1972:209-10), his holistic approach to mission was also welcomed by some others in the evangelical circle such as, Costas, Padilla, Escobar and Conn. Since then, effort to study the holistic approach has accelerated. The Willow Bank report of 1978 was the fruit from Bermuda on a consultation about the gospel and culture. It studied

¹⁶ In 1973, the *Chicago Declaration of Evangelical Social Concern* was announced by some evangelists who insisted on the social responsibility of Christians. This statement influenced the Lausanne in 1974.

¹⁷ His holistic concept was explained in his *Christian Mission in the Modern World*. Holistic idea has an organic meaning, which does not separate evangelism and social responsibility.

“how God’s revelation can transmit into the culture” (Stott & Coote 1981:311-39). The Madras declaration on evangelical social action in 1979 and the Pastoral letter in 1979 then followed.

Following Nairobi 1975, Melbourne CWME in 1980 accepted the good news concept as the redemptive and liberating power for all human beings and it was understood as the sign of the coming kingdom. Engelsviken (2003:492) affirms that; “the goal of the mission is a reconciled humanity and renewed creation”, that is, because of the understanding of the mission of God (*missio Dei*) as the source of and basis for the mission of the church. This holistic approach to *missio Dei* is for the “genuine renewal of Trinitarian/*missio Dei* theology” (Bevans & Schroeder 2004:291). In the 1980’s, the holistic understanding of mission was accelerated from Pattaya LCWE and the presentation of the Thailand statement. One of Pattaya’s achievements was the availability of mini-consultations, which included separate parts for evangelism and social responsibility. This statement “stressed a necessity of incarnated evangelism instead of nominal evangelism” (Scherer & Bevans 1992:274). In the conclusion of this statement, the International Consultation on the relationship between Evangelism and Social Responsibility of Grand Rapids (1982) discussed the paragraph 4 entitled *The Nature of Evangelism* and paragraph 5 *Christian Social Responsibility*. Stott (1996:171) notes: “But the Covenant leaves these two duties side by side without spelling out their relationship to each other, except to paragraph 6 that in *the churches’ mission of sacrificial service, evangelism is primary*”. The production of the second LCWC in Manila (1989), the Manila Manifesto, opened widely the holistic approach. The meaning of authentic gospel or whole gospel is explained as follows:

The authentic Gospel must become visible in the transformed lives of men and women. As we proclaim the love of God, we must be involved in loving service, and as we preach the kingdom of God, we must be committed to its demands of justice and peace. Evangelism is primarily because our chief concern is with the Gospel, that all people may have the opportunity to accept Jesus Christ... he also demonstrates its arrival by works of mercy and power. We are also called today to a similar integration of words and deeds.... We also affirm that good news and good works are inseparable (Stott 1996:236).

Nevertheless, it remains true that these two, the classical interpretation of *missio Dei* and the ecumenical concept of it, often made room for the theo-cultural identity crisis in missiology and ecumenics, and the recent inter-religious encounters in some theological arena. For example, in one of the religious pluralistic approaches, “W.C Smith has used the concept of *missio Dei* to develop his theology of religion that *missio Dei* through the church is not God’s only mission in

world, rather church's task is a part of his total mission to humankind" (Engelsviken 2003:493-4). It is worth noting that in recent years, there has been a growing consensus on a holistic understanding of *missio Dei* in both the missionary and the ecumenical movements. In the section, which follows, we shall draw insight from particular sources as we attempt to construct the parameters of *perichoresis* (as *missio Dei*) within an intercultural theological framework.

2.3 *Perichoresis* as parameters of intercultural theology

2.3.1 Introduction

As Küster (2003:171) explains:

Three disciplines are the resource of intercultural theology. While missiology is the ways for Christianity to take form in different cultures, ecumenics is connected with pluralism of confession, and comparative religion concerns questions of cultural contact, conflict and exchange in the premise that religion is a cultural system.

Intercultural theology is constructed by drawing from the foci of these three disciplines. In the foregoing, we have traced mission movements in terms of a holistic approach of *missio Dei*, from a classical to an ecumenical understanding of the term. Presently, our concern is how this *missio Dei* as a foundation of mission draws from and interprets the theological constants, missiologically. This study does not intend to deal with the themes systematically. Based on Bevan & Schroeder's deduction of the missiological implications of Christology, ecclesiology, eschatology, salvation, anthropology, and culture, we shall consider the following question; as an inner nature of *missio Dei*, how can *perichoresis* be opened up and interpreted to expand on these implications and construct intercultural theology and *praxis*?

2.3.2 Mutual indwelling

2.3.2.1 Introduction: Dynamic communication

The *perichoretic* relationship of the Divine Trinity hermeneutically embraces the dynamic. This

term, dynamic, in relation to intercultural means, the continual mutual penetrating. If the *missio Dei*, as God's initiative love to the world in *praxis*, is revealed in the world through incarnation, then, His *missio Dei* in incarnation has continual character in every time and space. We describe this character of continual incarnation of *missio Dei* as the actualisation of incarnation. According to the imperative of *missio Dei*, Christianity is also called to be incarnated in the world continually. This continual mutual-penetrating of the Divine Trinity is described as an existing manner of Father, son, and Spirit. Similarly, the existing manner of Christianity with the world is also a continual mutual penetrating through incarnation. In this regard, dynamic (continual mutual-penetrating) communication is the intercultural re-interpretation of the mutual indwelling of *perichoresis*. What then are the authority of and the conditions for dynamic communication? Answering this question will establish the relation between gospel and culture as culture versus culture mode.

2.3.2.2 Foundation of dynamic communication

Mutual indwelling, which is a manner of existence of *perichoresis*, is the continual-mutual communication, which stresses the dynamic. Where then can we find the foundation of the dynamic communication? Researching the meanings of the incarnation will enable us find the foundation of the dynamic communication, which is a manner of existence of God and a foundation of intercultural communication. Kim G.J (1999:170-3) ascribes "a theological meaning for the incarnation as a self-degradation of God". We find that a common denominator of the incarnation for modern theologians is a love and degradation of God, even if the ways to reach the common denominator are all different. Even though they have a common denominator, love and degradation of God, the ways to reach the conclusion also cannot be ignored. We cannot accept the existential meaning, love and degradation of God, without the uniqueness of the incarnation, which is the theological identity of Christianity. God-centred theologians confess the importance of historicity, whilst ignoring the existential meaning of historicity and the super-historicity of the incarnation. As they insist that religious truth is relative and that none of the religions can be the only spokesperson, it becomes meaningless for them to discuss the uniqueness or oneness of the incarnation.

In the same vein, the historicity of incarnation is ignored by inclusivists, who regard the differences between human beings and Christ not from a vertical perspective but from the horizontal. They also consider the absoluteness of the incarnation as relative. Exclusivists, on the

other hand, embody a risk of concealment of the presence of incarnation. This implies that exclusivistic idea partially stresses the absolute of the incarnation but ignores the incarnational life, which is the existential meaning of it. Therefore, incarnation has to be understood within a balance of the historical phase and the existential meaning. This is the basis of the holistic understanding of incarnation. While the historical phase of the incarnation stresses the uniqueness and oneness of the incarnation, simultaneously the presence of the incarnation focuses the dynamic of the incarnation revealed in the life of Christians through the Holy Spirit existentially.

In this meaning, incarnation is the foundation of the *missio Dei*. For the reason that incarnation has its authority on an initiative love of the Divine Trinity, it becomes the answer to the *why* of the *missio Dei*. To mention incarnation is to refer to Jesus Christ, who came to us in a once-and-for-all event of God. In essence, Jesus Christ is the answer to the question; *what* is incarnation? In other words, Jesus is the gospel as well as the contents of the gospel or the existential meaning of it. Further, in the holistic meaning, the actualisation of the incarnation puts the authority on the initiative love and the degradation of God. This degraded love of God has to be dynamically realised in the believer's life. The incarnation itself is the truth, and the gospel and the model for all Christians. The purpose of the incarnation of Jesus Christ is for the actualisation of the *missio Dei*.

In the incarnational model of mission, the mission field is the kingdom of God. The place in which the word is realised by deed is the incarnational field and the expression of that life is the very actualisation of the incarnation. The repetition of the actualisation of the incarnation in the Holy Spirit is interculturalisation. Interculturalisation is a methodology which considers how incarnation could be realised among us (ecumenics) and among others (comparative religion). Thus incarnation suggests the methodological foundation, that is degradation, for interculturalisation. This self-degradation is the authority of the *perichoresis* of the Divine Trinity as well as it is the model to follow when Christianity encounters the other. This mystery of the mutual indwelling is the manner of being of the Divine Trinity. The relational mode of the *perichoresis* is revealed to the world through incarnation, it is revealed through the self-degradation of Jesus. In other words, the self-degradation of the Divine Trinity in relation to other culture is the very foundation of the dynamic communication.

2.3.2.3 Culture versus culture mode

What is the new paradigm for opening the space for the dynamic, supplementing the weakness of contextual paradigms, which are not dynamic but static? We suggest intercultural paradigm as a prerequisite for the culture versus culture relationship as the answer. We agree with Hiebert, who stresses that “we must be careful to proclaim the gospel, not our culture” (Hiebert 1994:73). However, Christianity, which operates in cultures, manifests itself as a form of the Christian culture in relation to the cultures. The world learns, experiences, and approaches the authentic gospel through contact with Christian cultures. Invariably, the gospel that we propagate appears as forms of the Christian cultures to the world. The world will judge whether Christianity is authentic or not, through the cultures and the *praxis* of Christianity. Consequently, we shall approach this matter with the new paradigm, ‘culture vs. culture’ that is considered as the dynamic relationship between culture and gospel, in place of the traditional paradigm, ‘gospel vs. culture’. When Christianity encounters other culture, they can have a dynamic relationship which can “influence, challenge, enrich and invigorate each other,” (Bosch 1991:456). This is the basic spirit of mutual indwelling and is possible when they encounter in the mode of ‘culture vs. culture’.

2.3.2.3.1 Problems of the Culture versus Gospel mode

At this point, we can identify the attitudes, which separate the gospel and culture as exclusivistic and functional attitudes. Through their commonness, which is a confrontational mode between the gospel and culture, problems derived from the confrontational mode can be identified. Jung S. H (2004:78-96) introduces “some patterns of the ‘gospel vs. culture’ paradigm in exclusivistic attitude of culture, functional attitude of culture, and cultural attitude as general grace”. What are the problematic issues in first two patterns?

i. Exclusivistic or colonial attitude of mission

Criticising Mbiti’s view of culture and gospel, Nicholls (1979:15) asserts that culture is never neutral; “the Gospel is never the guest of any culture; it is always its judge and redeemer”. An attention to the interaction between the supra-cultural and the cultural is always situated on the basis of this dichotomous thought. He further claims that;

by supra-cultural we mean the phenomena of cultural belief and behavior that have their source outside and of human culture... The origin of supra-cultural reality is the spiritual

realm of God and His kingdom and of Satan and his kingdom (1979:13).

This idea is founded upon the two-kingdom theory of Luther. In this interpretation, the attitude of Christians toward the world or others is very positive and challengeable, but a dichotomous attitude binds Christians in the world to interest that is more spiritual. This attitude is closely related to Barth's "qualitative difference" (cf. Knitter 1985:84). Barth saw that there is no common base between gospel and other traditions. There is a qualitative difference between God and human beings; likewise, the same the kind of differences exist between Christianity and other cultural traditions. In this regard, Barth considered cultures, which are all efforts of human being, negatively (Barth 1956:333). For him, because "Christianity is a revealed religion", other religions and cultures are just an expression of unbelief toward God (:297).

The problem of the exclusivistic view is that it does not consider the contexts, with which the objects are faced. Moreover, it sets culture up as an object, which is separated from the *Sitz-im-Leben* of the subject; it excludes the participation and the subjectivity of the object. For Jung S.H (2004:86-7), "this attitude made us see the culture static, and made us to approach culture for ruling". The separation between the object and the subject of cognition means a removal of all common parts of both. As a result, all beings outside of the subject become objectified, hence are understood from the viewpoint of utilisation and domination. The object is therefore not only a target of impersonal relationship but for certain purposes, it is also a target of domination. The representative mission model based upon this exclusivistic view was the colonial mission.

After the Enlightenment, mission at the colonies was associated with cultural superiority, which influenced racial discrimination and the superiority consciousness of the West. Missionaries were regarded as pioneers of Western expansion. Vries (2001) evaluates one of the theological influences of that era on mission by studying how the doctrine of two kingdoms influenced the colonial identity of missionaries. At first, he points out that unprepared and unelaborated missiological approach at the mission field ushered a confused understanding of mission:

Mission theology was ill prepared to meet the scorn of the world, and had no effective means of counteracting this anti-missionary awareness. The lack of a theological understanding of the relationship between mission and the existing powers was the cause of this embarrassment. The stumbling block of mission theology was often that the concept of the Kingdom of God was allowed to enter German theology in a confused form (Vries 2001:63).

What then did they misunderstand about the two kingdoms theory? These appeared to be the limitations of the commands of God and the tyranny of the devil, which enters both realms. Vries (2001:65) remarks further that:

The mingling of the spiritual and worldly realm is the essence of the *potestas tyrannical*. Thus, tyranny can develop from the spiritual as well as from the worldly realm. In tyranny, the worldly office evolves towards a pseudo-spiritual one and the spiritual towards a pseudo-worldly one.

As a result, this evil influence in both realms caused confusion and estrangement from their purpose.

Another problem of the exclusivistic view is that a distinctive division between God and the world could isolate God from His creation, that is to say, if we contrast God and His revelation to the world, He could be understood as separated from the world. Strict dualistic idea of Christianity's relationship with other cultures resulted in a narrow location of Christian culture and theology. It restricts a sovereignty of Christ realised in the world, ultimately limiting Christian participation in culture.

ii. Functional attitude

Second, in the 'culture vs. gospel' mode, culture could be treated functionally. Schreier (1986:46) explains that; "functionalist approaches are concerned with how the various aspects of society are constituted and interrelate to form a cultural whole". This method focuses primarily on how to find substitutable cultural contents, which are functionally similar, within the target culture then applying these contents to the target culture. The duplication model is the very functional cognitive method applied in Christianity and the most well known aspect of the model is the 'dynamic or functional equivalence'¹⁸ of Kraft (1979:261-75). In the dynamic-equivalence duplication model, when Christianity spreads into a local culture, it finds substitute meanings for functionally similar things. Therefore, this presupposes that there are equivalent things within the Christian culture and the local culture.

¹⁸ Dynamic-equivalence method of Bible translation is first translated into concept, the equivalents of which are then sought in the local language. These concepts are then translated into imagery specific to the culture (Kraft 1983:7).

The problem of a functional duplication model is that “more attention is given to the surface patterns of a culture than to its deeper meanings or to the interconnections between different cultural patterns” (Schreiter 1985:8). The implication is that it could be identified with specific contents of culture; it considers only the surface patterns of culture. Its attention to empirical detail in any cultural explanation is its principal strength, but “the common sense explanations based upon empirical observation often turn out to be Anglo-Saxon common sense, which may or may not be shared by the culture under investigation” (:46). For example, “complex relationships not found in Anglo-Saxon culture, such as extended kinship system and non-purposive behaviour, such as ritual and magic, will not be explained well” (:46). Thus, it can fail to notice or catch the deep meanings and the symbolic considerations. If Christianity interprets the contents of the gospel only functionally for the locals, then, it would not grasp the symbolic meaning of the local culture.

Moreover, the functional model presupposes that culture is static: “While it can excel in the elaboration of the aspects of identity of culture, it cannot deal as effectively with transformed well” (van Peursen 1987:46). It is effectively used for a short period but cannot be employed for a longer duration. Another threat of functionalism is ‘operationalism’ (van Peursen 1987:136-47). Functionalism as a method appears to be concerned with the relationship with the object, and because it actually operates the will of the subject of cultural propagation, openness then disappears. In a case in which the object culture is misunderstood, the facts then could be misinterpreted.¹⁹ For the translation, Sanneh (1989:208) suggests that:

Language may therefore be regarded as instrumental in function and contextual in character, with Christian mission helping thus to strengthen vernacular languages in their diverse particularity and enormous multiplicity. Such confidence in the value of the vernacular has encouraged the role of recipient culture as decisive for the final appropriation of the message.

It means that the translation model, which is one of functional models; also considers the importance of the local culture as do other contextual theologies. However, these functional approaches still focus on the interpretation of the counterculture, not seeing them as ‘*the other*’.

¹⁹ For an example of this, van Peursen chose medical doctors who work in massive specialist hospitals. These doctors sometimes give prescriptions by just consulting the patient’s medical chart when the patients have never met the specific doctor. In this case, doctors who work in huge organised hospitals can operate based on just their patients’ data (van Peursen 1987:137).

In a functional view, if we have an inter-communicational situation with the other, then we become *being* but “if the openness disappears resulting in operationalism or distortion, then the weaknesses of the functionalism are revealed” (van Peursen 1987:147). In the same way, cognitive objects also have to be understood culturally and holistically within the *Sitz-im-Leben*. The idea that functionalism ignores cultural context needs to be overcome and the rule for the framework needs to be a consideration for the other or the counterculture. As in the confession of Psalm 24, “the earth in the Lord’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it,” in the relationship with the world, the holistic view could produce results that are more effective; this could widen the realms of Christianity.

Both the exclusivistic and the functional methods treat the other or other cultures as a sort of object to overcome or transform, not as the subject of cognition. Christianity, which puts on culture to appear in the world, always dynamically interacts with the other in the inter-space. This is no other than a cultural interpretation of mutual indwelling and it is for this reason that we shall consider religion and culture in the inter-space as a culture vs. culture mode.

2.3.2.3.2 Weakness culture versus culture mode

In the previous section, we examined some problems of the ‘religion vs. culture’ mode, and identified functionalism and exclusivism as the basis for colonial mission. Ironically, we also have to point out that the problem of the ‘culture vs. culture’ mode is that many missionaries identified their cultural background with the gospel. In this case, it closely related with the imperialism of the West. For example, among Americans Christian pietism or belief is identified with patriotism believing God specifically loves and blesses America more than the others. For them, constructing America’s values and culture and spreading it to the world is the same as spreading the gospel. For them, it means that their purpose and God’s purpose become one. Many times, “political parties and government used Christian sentiments and symbols for their own purpose. When religion is used to justify political and cultural practices, it is civil religion” (Hiebert 1985:53-4). In reality, the authenticity of Christianity or Christian culture was employed politically and economically by militarism and imperialism, and the way of colonial mission was justified for the world evangelism. This was why one could not consider the cultures mutually. Specifically, this is a case in which self-righteous and self-esteeming attitude for own culture prevent one from seeing other cultures as ‘*the other*’. Secondly, Hiebert claims that:

In equating gospel and culture has been a growing sense of relativism with regard to sin. All

cultures have their own definitions of what constitutes sin. As culture changes, so do their ideas of sin... As cultural definitions of sin change, if we do not distinguish biblical norms from those of our culture, we cannot affirm the absolute nature of biblically defined standards (:54).

As we present the weakness of the ‘culture vs. culture’ mode, it is also possible to overcome the problems associated with that mode as we consider also the disadvantages of the ‘gospel vs. culture’ mode. In the following section, we shall consider the strength and advantages of the ‘culture vs. culture’ mode regardless of its weakness.

2.3.2.3.3 Foundation of culture versus culture mode

The foundation of the culture vs. culture mode can be summarised in two. The first is that culture is a subjective being. As the object of the gospel, it is not just a transforming object, but also a being to which the gospel has to listen. According to Schreiter (1986:40), one cannot “be satisfied with having listened once to a culture and then presuming that the contextualisation of the culture has been achieved. This would presume that the culture is an unchangeable and static reality”. In this regard, van Puersen (1987:21) understands that “the reason why we have to consider the culture as subjective reality is the dynamic character of the culture”. We can conclude then, that culture is not a passive object but an active subject. The second foundation is the idea of culture as religio-culture in which other religions encounter Christianity as a culture. These two points shall be discussed below.

i. Culture as the subjective being

In considering culture as a subjective being, Schreiter (1985:39-40) observes that; “the culture as the object of gospel is not just transformative object but, it has to be treated as a being that gospel has to commit continually to listen”. Moreover, while we consider each culture as dynamic and the personal subject in intercultural situation, we shall categorise the inter-space - the place that each culture encounters the gospel - as the subjective space. This presentation about the possibility of the subjective space is an attempt to overcome the subjectivism tendency. The attitude of subjectivism only considers the subject or the encounter on a cultural encountering. In addition, the dualistic idea, which distinguishes the subject from the object, you from me, and text from context, does not leave a margin for the third subjective being.

Based on the dynamic character of culture therefore, we stress a subjectivity of culture. Even if we have to recognise the importance of the subjectivity of culture, the subjectivism has to be subjugated. Levinas identified the problems of modern philosophy in relation to subjectivism. In the ontological tradition of the West, the issue of relationship with the other has always been a secondary consideration after the *ego*, the subject and being as central themes of philosophy are taken care of. Kim Y.S (2001:7) explains that Levinas' claim was that unbalances are incurred when the other could not establish his rightful place and is degraded as an object of *ego* and seized by it. Moreover, according to modern philosophy centred on subjectivism, human beings are the sole proprietors and others are depended on their will. Modern era steps forward to conquer nature by using science, and this has led to scientism, which joins, disjoins, and reconstructs without any limitation, and sees all others except human beings as the object. In this case, the other is just another object on a laboratory table of the subject.

Levinas (1974:188) understands that "the Western philosophy as a whole is ontological, holding the reality reducing the other to the self. The Western philosophy has been found as a history of reduction and absorption of the other with totality. In the Western philosophy the other is already a possessed being to *ego*. The Western philosophy ensured the stability of *ego* identifying the *otherness* with *them*. Encountering the *otherness* is considered as shaking the foundation of stability, while *otherness* itself is always reduced to oneness with *ego*. Ontological imperialism of the Western philosophy revealed itself in various ways, but its hidden purpose was to find the way to offset the impact of alterity. Therefore, Levinas "named this *egocentric* Western philosophy as narcissism" (1987:49). This implies that, the Western philosophy has the history of absorbing others to sustain its own existence. In this, Levinas saw a sort of violence in the subjective philosophy, that is, a violence, which imprisons the *otherness*, a violence that could not leave the *otherness* (1985:76, 98, 112).

How then can the subject find his own role? Where is the position of the object in relation to the subject? How can the object and the subject, the *ego* and the *other* communicate? The answer is in the alterity of culture. Levinas' conceptional demarcation of the *I* and the *other* brings us to the egocentric nature of the Western philosophy. It is difficult to sustain a relationship between the *ego* and the *other* in the structure which absorbs the *other* into the *I* because it is only when the absolute *otherness* of the *other* is considered and understood, that the *I* and the *other* can start having a relationship. How then does the *ego* become absolutely separated through its own essential internalisation and is able to communicate without integrity, absorption or penetration?

(1979:89). Levinas' answer to this is transcendency and desire. For him, desire and need can be compared. Need is a general inclination in human beings to get something which they do not have. Conversely, desire is inclined to exteriority and the alienation of the other. The desire toward the other is not intended to absorb the *other* to the *I*. The purpose of the desire toward the other is not to make the other as the object of need, but inclined toward the other recognising the existence of the other as itself. Levinas understood that even if human beings have an *egocentric* interiority, they also have a transcendency toward the other as the other. Through the transcendency toward the *other* from the '*I*', rightful communication could be made possible (1978:57).

Thus, Levinas took leave of the Western philosophy, which is smudged with a subjective-centred totality, and he made a starting point in the other philosophy. What is the other? Levinas distinguished two different types of other. The term *autrui*, used for the personalised other, is contained in *l'autre* as every human being existed outside of the *ego*, Levinas 'used especially the term *autrui* for the personalised other and, the other (*autrui*) could not be absorbed as the same' (1969:24; 1969:111; 1979:77-9). Levinas considered as "the other as the weak oppressed by *egocentric* persistence and subjectivism. The other is the weak, the poor, the widow and the orphan" (1979:83). In a later writing, he further explains that; "the other awaits my answer and stirs my responsibility" (1985:158). The other also rebukes my self-indulgence (*jouissance*), and then leads me to be the righteous subject in front of the other. The other is a being who could not be possessed and controlled by the subject. There is an abyss and valley between the '*I*' and the *other*. Before the mutual encounter, the other watches me from beyond the mutual space and makes me to become conscious of my obligation towards him. Levinas defines the other's alterity and his relationship with the subject as a mystery (1979:87-8). When we respond to the other, at last "the meaning of the subject is revealed" (1985:123-8). Levinas saw that a sense of responsibility is the first step toward rectifying subjectivity, that is to say, only in responsibility toward the other, can one find the solution to the question of subjectivity. In view of the fact that the subject undertakes the responsibility of the other, this subject subrogates the other. Levinas' 'subject' therefore, endures a hostage-like situation because the subject is formed by the other; it is a hostage from the first stage. This endless responsibility of one side could not be explained rationally without ethics, religion and spirituality.

The assumption that Christianity has universal salvific truth implies that the truth of Christianity is still universal even beyond the fence of the Christian culture. Levinas' position is that when

we respond to the other, the meaning of the subject is finally revealed, for the purpose of the human life is to recognise others in the encountering space and with this, the Christian culture carves out a cultural identity for itself for the first time. The identity of the subject without the object (the *other*) becomes formalised and fossilised but Christ's love, which is a fixed point in Christianity, has genuine value in space encountering with the subject. Moreover, the alterity of the other is infinity. We cannot clarify the alterity or take off the alterity and the mystery of the other. If we try to do that, it means that we have a possessive structure. However, the infinity of the other becomes a motivating power for Christianity; giving life continually and it shows that the Christian culture at last has responsible subjectivity in front of the other or the other culture.

Thus, Levinas' philosophy of the other announces that the starting point of the human subject is not himself (*ego*) but the other; this stands against the Western philosophical tradition, which puts *ego* and subjectivity in the centre. Now we can see that the true meaning of *perichoresis*, of mutual penetrating in-between the subject and the object appears as personal 'culture vs. culture' mode. It means that if Christianity is a mutual relationship between the subject and the object, then Christians could recognise themselves as the subject and enrich the other.

ii. Culture as religio-culture

The second condition of the culture vs. culture mode is the consideration that Christianity has existed as a religious culture. In other words, Christianity has also appeared in the encountering phase as cultural mode. In the relationship between religion and culture, some theologians view Christianity as culture. As T.S Elliot mentions; "no culture can appear or develop except in relation to a religion...the development of culture and the development of religion, in a society uninfluenced from without, cannot be clearly isolated from each other" (Elliot 1940:100-1; cf. Hard 1984:39). Fundamentally, therefore, culture is an embodiment of a people's religions. Tillich also expresses a similar idea that "religion as ultimate concern is the meaning-giving substance of culture, and culture is the totality of forms in which the religion is substance of culture, culture is the form of religion" (Tillich 1959:42). In Bavinck's view, "every aspect of culture originates from religious sources" (Bavinck 1981:21). It is not possible here to consider all theological opinions of the relationship between culture and religion, but it is reasonable to indicate that opinions of theologians agree on the cultural mode of religion. Of course, mutual penetrating and influencing each other are also important as Küster (2003:171) shows. His claim is that culture and religion are related to and penetrate each other.

For Jung J.H (1995:58), the relationship between culture and religion can be approached through the science of religion. His understanding of how religions could propagate their religious contents, and how there is a possibility of observing the distinctive attitude of a religious faith, is that religions have their contents in culture. According to him, the experience of encountering with the object is accepted by the subject intentionally and interpreted meaningfully, that is, the experience is re-organised by an interpretation of the encounter with the object. The experience is immanent in the consciousness of the subject because the experience is accepted through the interpretation of encountering with the object. Nevertheless, the contents of experience are not just immanent; immanent experience is expressed through language and action. These two constitute a complicated and tangible structure, which the notion of culture can explain. Religious experiences referred to as faith are not different; there is obviously a sort of encountering between the human and the object immanently but faith means an experienced reality accepted not through encountering with the divine object directly, but through encountering with curved opportunities such as myths and sacrifices. What this means is that faith is a sort of experience and religion is an experiential reality.

As every experience is externalised in spite of its immanence, religious experience is also revealed as a concrete life mode of human beings. In fact, the discussion about religious experiences is possible when we directly encounter with symbols, which have melted religious contents. The religious culture that we discuss means the externalising of experience. Hence, the theme of the understanding of religious culture might be started from describing the externalising mode of experience, which explains religious experience as culture. In other words, “the phenomenon traditionally called as religion could be described as culture” (:113-4). In addition, this “cultural phenomenon is appeared in myths, sacrifices, and the communities” (:115-53) but “the culture is not just an externalisation of religion, but the measure or mark” (Hard 1984:28-9). Hard shows that from the question - Is there an ethical norm, which transcends their own cultures which human beings can use to judge their own or other’s cultures -, we can manage culture in the religious realm. While religion offers a norm to culture, culture’s role is to act as a measure or mark for religion. In this case, culture as a measure of religion is reversed and a genuineness through religion’s fragrance appeared in their culture. This becomes beneficial when we consider culture as an externalisation of religion.

In the foregoing, we have examined the meanings, foundations, and conditions of dynamic

communication as a concrete meaning of mutual indwelling of the *perichoretic* relationship within the Trinity; and culture vs. culture mode as a suitable structure for mutual indwelling. In the following section, we shall consider mutual space and how Christianity as a being of dynamic communication in *perichoretic* hermeneutics can open this space.

2.3.3 Mutual space

2.3.3.1 Introduction

As we have shown, in the interpretation of mutual space in *perichoretic* relationship of the Divine Trinity, the Divine Persons empty themselves into one another making mutual space sharing space each giving his divine life to the other in selfless love. Constructing mutual relationship in the ‘culture vs. culture’ phase means that “overlapped inter-space is formed encountering each culture’s boundaries” (Coakley 2001:198-200). Additionally, mutual penetrating between inter-cultures happens in the inter-space. The main concern of this section is to consider how this inter-space is formed and what its contents and theories are. To make inter-space in a cultural dimension has the same principle as the incarnation of Jesus into a defective world. As already shown, in the relationship of *perichoresis*, emptying and giving is the basic premise. The cultural meaning of mutual space in incarnational view is the emptying of themselves (that is, the communicators) in intercommunication, instead of a domination and replacement, which represent a functional and colonial view.

Furthermore, we have noted that within the Trinity, the foundation of their openness and the giving and sharing of their rooms come from mutual love. Therefore, the “Divine Trinity is open not because of His space because it is imperfect, but by virtue of the graciously overflowing love, open for all the beloved creatures” (Meeks 2000:118). It can be deduced then, that the “lesson of *kenosis* is a moral one” (Polkinghorne 2001:xiii) that ought to be considered imperative. This can be compared to the incarnation of Jesus Christ, who emptied himself, devoted His place and made space in the kingdom of God for human beings. The particular character of the Son’s mission is sacrificial self-giving that is centred on the cross and church practice (*praxis*) of mission should be an imitation of Christ (cf. Holmes 2006:89). In the same way, Christians ought to identify with the weakness and sinfulness of other cultures by opening their space and sharing it with them. This fact guarantees the foundation of formation of inter-space and the authority of mutual space needs to be examined in detail.

To discuss mutual space offers both the basis for dynamic mutual penetrating and the methodology for this mutual penetrating. While mutual penetrating is an epistemological premise for the attitude of Christianity toward other religious cultures, mutual space deals with the methodological aspect of how Christianity treats other culture practically. It also needs to deal with the possibility of creating mutual space after studying the meaning and theories of mutual space. Finally, we shall examine how inter-communication is realised in mutual space.

2.3.3.2 Theories of mutual space

According to Barth, a human being in relationship and humanity of co-existence is *imago Dei*; hence, he understood *imago Dei* as a relational dimension. He regards “humanity as a co-existence, co-inherence, and reciprocity is the secret of *imago Dei*” (Barth 1960:21-3). “It is this relationship in the inner divine being, which is repeated and reflected in God’s eternal covenant with man as revealed and operative in time in the humanity of Jesus” (:218-9).²⁰ Western philosophy exceedingly emphasised subjectivity and its freedom, so *I (Ich)* can be formed or exist without *Thou (Du)*. For Barth, the subjectivity itself could be revealed in the dynamic relation with *Thou (Du)*. Without the relationship with *Thou*, the existential subjectivity cannot be formed. His anthropology was grounded on the fact that human beings as covenant-partner have chosen to live in the relationship with God and others. He claims that; “we must press straight on from the fact that the humanity of man consists in the determination of his being as a being with the other... we describe humanity as a determination of human being... as a being of man with others” (:243). The mode of existence of God is *perichoretic* relationship mutually indwelled each other in love.²¹ Barth stresses that beings, who resemble the Trinity’s existential mode have essentially the public-humanity (*mit-menschlichkeit*) as character, which mutually loves and has relationship. Concretely, for the realisation of the existential mode of ‘I am Thou art’ (:251-2) he suggested four necessary and sufficient conditions:

²⁰ Barth criticized the opinions of Roman Catholic and of even some Reformation leaders who interpreted *imago Dei* as a supernatural power or original perfection, belonging to human beings, whereas he saw it as a relationship.

²¹ Barth’s discovery is that *imago Dei* is relational. Fundamentally, the Trinity God is in the relationship of *perichoresis*. When human being was created following *imago Dei*, he was also created to exist in the relationship. Thus, the relationship between God and human beings, human beings and their fellows repeats this original relationship. Despite the differences between these two, human relationship has similarity with the perichoretic relationship of the Trinity of God through Jesus. The more human beings secede from this relationship, the more they become inhuman and depart from *imago Dei*

Being in encounter is a being in which one man (human being) looks the other in the eye...being in encounter consists in the fact that there is mutual speech and hearing...being in encounter consists in the fact that we render mutual assistance in the act of being...being in encounter consists in the fact that all the occurrence which we have so far described as the basic form of humanity stands under the sign that it is done on both sides with gladness (: 250-85).

Mutual space in mutual encountering does not just remain as empty space; personal and subjective encountering dynamically wrestle in this space, in the specific contexts. As Barth explains, human beings who have a genuine encounter have this relationship – the relationship looks the other in the eyes, it is a relationship of mutual speech and hearing, a relationship of mutual assistance in the act of being, and a relationship of gladly and voluntarily acting on both sides. We shall regard this space as the third space, and then overcome what Jung S.H (2004:129) refers to as the “subjectism-centered tendency”. When considering encounter, this subjectism-centered tendency considers only the subject. In addition, in the dichotomous view of the subject and the object, the *I* and *Thou*, the text and context, there is no margin for the third space. The notion of mutual space aims at overcoming the existing tendency summarised as subjectism-centered.

All cultures have their own cultural borders. While the border becomes a boundary to separate own identities, it also can become a point of contact to meet with the other. This double meaning for the border has a spatial implication. In the cultural inter-space, it is possible to express that culture as separate from the other, and simultaneously, as meeting with the other. The independency of mutual space made in the boundary and the relationships, which occur in the mutual space, will become our concern through the lens of some spatial theories. This will include also the *praxis* of Barth’s presentation of the relationship mentioned above. Before we consider the *praxis* of the intercultural communication, we need to examine the intercultural meaning of mutual space with the help of Levinas’ the theory of space. Additionally, Buber’s norm, ‘between’ is a key to understand the other within the third space.

i. Martin Buber’s space theory of ‘between’

Martin Buber investigates the essence of the human being through the relational norm. The important thing here is that the genuine relational essence accepts the object as it is, as the motive for the formation of relationship. Modern philosophy, especially individualism and

collectivism tried to set up a genuine humanism, but failed for these 'isms' could not meet the need of the entire humanity. Enlightenment was an attempt to liberate human beings as an independent entity from an absolute and clerical relationship. Whereas in individualism, human rights and the desire of individuals are stressed more than social rights, reverse collectivism preferentially emphasises entire society more than individuals but the motivation for these two views comes from the same source, solitude (cf. De Wit 2004:368-9):

Both views of life – modern individualism and modern collectivism – however different their causes may be, are essentially the conclusion or expression of the same human condition, only at the different stages. This condition is characterised by the union of cosmic and social homelessness; dread of the situation of solitude such as has probably never existed before to the same extent. The human person feels himself to be a man exposed by nature...and same time a person isolated in the midst of the tumultuous human world. The first reaction of the spirit to the awareness of this new and uncanny position is modern individualism; the second is modern collectivism (Buber 1947:200).

Consequently, Buber suggests a genuine third alternative, 'betweenness' with others:²²

The fundamental fact of human existence is neither the individual as such nor the aggregate as such. Each, considered by itself, is a mighty abstraction. The individual is a fact of existence in so far as he steps into a living relation with other individuals. The aggregate is a fact of existence in so far as it is built up of living units of relation. The fundamental fact of human existence is man with man' (:202-3).

Furthermore, Buber decided to see himself as in between, a solution to human alienation. While he did not place himself as an observer or interpreter of the meeting, he committed himself into the meeting sphere. Thus, Buber declared that "I do not use a filter; I become a filter" (cf. Kang S.B 1999:122). It means that he wanted to be the subject to carry out a role of 'betweenness'. Placing himself at the marginal sphere, he tried to recover the relationship, which was divided. He saw that the solution to the alienation of the world is possible when he became a being in between. His understanding was to participate in 'betweenness'. As we re-interpret this in a Christianity way, it resembles the way of the incarnation of Jesus. Jesus as an eternal Thou or the Whole Other, committed himself in between taking the path of genuine communication in love.

²² We expect that Buber's third alternative in the personal relationship will help to overcome the cultural individualism, which is overemphasized in local theologies, and a cultural collectivism which stresses the whole theology and ignores the local theologies.

Jesus acted not as auxiliary, but as eternal sovereignty of communication in between. Through and with the dynamic role in mutual space or between, the Christian's duties in between become obvious; through his incarnational role in mutual space the genuine communication can be realised.

ii. Levinas' theory of space - the face of the other

While we recognise the existence of others before we consider them as possession structure, we can hear a sort of commandment that the face of others expresses, that is, Christians can only hear the voice of God in the personal relation with the other, and be challenged, and reflect themselves. The mutual space, in which Christianity as a culture encounters other culture, has to be a personal space. According to Levinas, "if one could possess, grasp, and know the other, it would not be the other... the relationship with the others is generally sought out as a fusion" (Levinas 1979:90). This place is a space that God personally encounters and empowers through the Holy Spirit both Christianity and the other. In this place, Christianity cannot insist on the 'I' as the subjectivity, but can only encounter each other, listen to each other, contribute to each other and finally enjoy each other in the Holy Spirit.

At this point, we shall examine how mutual space is opened and formed according to Levinas. For Levinas, even though the other is not the incarnation of God, his face reflects God's revelation (cf. 1969:79). In difference to Western philosophy, which considers the face of the other as anonymous, Levinas defines the face of the other thus:

The way in which the other presents himself, exceeding the idea of the other in me, we here name face. This mode does not consist in figuring as a theme under my gaze, in spreading itself forth as a set of qualities forming an image. The face of the other at each moment destroys and overflows the plastic image it leaves me, the idea existing to my own measure and to the measure of its *ideatum* – the adequate idea (:50-1).

The face of the other is a strange invasion, which cannot escape my will. The identity of the other's face does not depend on my recognition of its epiphany. The epiphany of the other creates a tension in me. Through the face of the other, we are confronted with the responsibility toward the face of the other. "Thus I cannot evade by silence the discourse which the epiphany of the face opens" (:201). However, this invasion is not for intimidation, but makes it possible for me to transcend the closed-world of my interiority to the external. Levinas explains this

further; “I understand the responsibility as responsibility for the other, thus as responsibility for what is not my deed, or for what does not even matter to me; or which precisely does matter to me, is met by me as face” (1985:95). The face of the other does not just open us to the other, but compels us to stand as responsible subjects rather than egocentric subjects. Therefore, the responsibility to the other is the structure of subjectivity. “Responsibility in fact is not a simple attribute of subjectivity, as if the latter already existed in itself, before the ethical relationship. Subjectivity is not for itself; it is, once again, initially for another” (:96).

In this theory, this mutuality forbids us to observe this world within own view, and it makes us realise that truth transcends the realm of individuals. Through the communication with the other, our small world can be opened, revealed, and transformed and our personality can mature. Thus, the subject can be a responsible subject through the encountering with the other in the mutual space, which is becomes open through the face. This face-to-face encounter of the subjects opens the space for dialogue.

2.3.3.3 Intercultural communication in mutual space

Interculturation expresses the idea that the process of inculturation is not simply the interaction between the gospel and culture, as if they represent two monolithic meaning systems, but between multiple cultural orientations. Intercultural communication is encountering between each subject with different stance on a common subject. The primary purpose of this communication is not a one-sided move to persuade one from learning from the other, so that one can be transformed and matured. The purpose of intercultural communication is to remove the “communicative forms that distort and mask the face of the other” (Murray 2003:2). On the issue of communication, Levinas wrestles to find the way to “avoid discursive practices that mask or silence the other and promote those that allow the other to speak” (:2). For Eliers (1997:78), “the history of the church is but one testimony of the attempts to communicate Christ’s message interculturally in many ways”. By this is meant the idea that Christianity is transmitted through mutual communication. We have already shown that the Divine Trinity communicate in the *perichoretic* relation and God is understood as revealing His will for us to communicate. The revelation through incarnation is His communicating tools. As God’s communication is *praxis* in incarnation, Christianity is also called to communicate with other religious cultures in incarnational *praxis*. Accordingly, communication is not monologue, but dialogue, and especially “missionary communication is not confined to verbal proclamation but

rather reflects and used the whole life of people with all their communicative possibilities and dimensions” (:75).

Furthermore, we have examined the idea of the other, who as a responsible subject opens the personal space to communicate. Secondly, we considered Buber’s space, which is the incarnational way to empty oneself. Through these two premises, we do see the possibility of opening intercultural communication, which is personal or mutually subjective, dynamic, and contextual.

At this point, it is crucial to first focus on the context in the phase of inter-communication, or intra-communication because when we just emphasise a transmission in the situation of communication, we cannot experience God’s diverse working in the different times and places. Contextual matters are a sort of hermeneutical process, the specific times and places that God is working have to be recognised more seriously. Second, the stress is on the dynamic character. In the mutual space one perceives the other beyond himself, and furthermore, “one is requested to find his potential and possibility through the mirror of the other” (Tillich 1990:164). Mutual encounter in the mutual space enables one to learn, and to teach and help each other. When Christianity crosses the boundary to meet another culture, mutual space is not a place, which is sharply distinguished. Christianity cannot also exclusively claim this space as private space because mission in the mutual space progresses in a cultural dimension. This space is public space to share life’s values including the value of gospel. However, the problem is that Christianity shows the dynamic character in the mutual space which is processed as public space. As a result, the question of subjectivity has to be dealt with, and in this case, the emphasis should be on mutual subjectivity. Encounter with the other might be a meeting of personal subjects; it is not a meeting of subject and object. When mutual subjectivity is guaranteed, the meaning of contextual and dynamic character of the mutual communication can then be properly enacted.

2.3.3.3.1 Characters of intercultural communication

The question at this point is; if we investigate intercultural communication characters critically, how can we find the way to open mutual space, which is equipped with mutual subjectivity, and contextual, dynamic characters?

2.3.3.3.1.1 Mutual subjective of intercultural communication

Communication of mutual subjectivity becomes the foundation of intercultural communication because this communication puts the other in an equal place in the mutual space, which is formed between interlocutors. This communication does not ignore mutual subjectivity. Accordingly, many scholars recognise the importance of mutual subjectivity in mutual communication. Our question here is; how can religious dialogue be possible in the intercultural context without resigning our subjectivity, but presupposing mutual transformation. In other words, is there another way for Christianity to do religious dialogue without losing self-identity? Cobb's communication theory, which focuses on difference, could be an answer to this question. We shall consider the importance of mutual subjectivity through Cobb's communication theory and the direct connection between the lack of mutual subjectivity and religious pluralism.

The way of communication could be divided in two. One of them is to find similar points between religious traditions that mostly leading scholars aligned with theo-centric religious pluralism (cf. Panikkar, Hick, Knitter, and Samartha). The other way is to allow the peculiarities of different religious traditions to induce mutual communication. The first way is premised on the idea that every single being has an unchangeable and common substance. It is grounded on the hypothesis of substantialism, which claims that all religions have common features, and have to realise the features to be recognised as true religions. This method therefore, seeks to find common grounds between religious traditions.

For instance, a chain of commonalities can be established among the Abrahamic religions. Concerning Judaism, Franz Rosenzweig regards the Jewish heritage as a positive force, and stresses that there is an unbreakable connection between the past and present (Rosenzweig 1971: 427-33). Similarly, citing the Vatican II's *Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to the Non-Christian Religions* (*Nostra Aetate*), Sonn (1989:440) claims that the Catholic position reckons that Christianity and Jewish religion are based on the idea that God works in all communities. And regarding the relationship with other faith groups, he further states that Muslims confirm, "all truth and piety reflect God's work, regardless of the religion in which they are found" (:441). In addition, Constantelos (1989:397) witnesses with a series of historical procedures and remarks that "many scholars, more recently, look for not only common elements but also common roots between religious traditions" For Panikkar (1978:69-73), a vital issue in intercultural communication is what he refers to as "mutual growth". This approach is also based on finding a common ground. Like other theologians who align with theo-centric religious

pluralism, he emphasises ecumenism, which is based on a common foundation, on transcendental principles, and on common experiences of the world religions.

Their theologies of commonality of religions seem to be influenced by W. S. Smith's 'World Theology', in which Smith suggests two norms – cumulative tradition (external things of religion) and faith (internal things such as love, righteousness), instead of the term religion. For him religion is a dynamic reality, which can change according to time and person. Smith proposes a world theology in which all religious people can agree to study the commonality of human faith (Smith 1989).

In the same vein, Knitter criticises Panikkar's notion of radical pluralism, which might lead participants in dialogue to delight in diversity without really judging the differences. He asserts that, "participants in inter-religious dialogue can be swept away with diversity and with incommensurability that miss the broader context... while he rightly insists that the diversity of religious experience is infinite, does that mean that all religious view can contribute to the dialogue?" (Knitter 1996:183-4) However, Knitter's assertion comes from the changed theological stance of theocentrism to soteriocentrism. Heim (Heil & Heim 1995:76) describes the difference between the two thus: "Theocentrism assumed common ground in the religious object and oriented dialogue on that basis. Soteriocentrism seeks common ground in human need – the religious subject – and orients dialogue on the basis". From this, he moves to the next stage insisting that; "there is common methodology and context, instead of common grounds of religions" (:73-9). Even if there are some commonalities between the encounters (religious traditions), these cannot be assumed, but can be found in dialogue. Consequently, these commonalities found in dialogue cannot be generalised.

We do not totally deny this approach,²³ but if we only focus on getting a common ground for religious traditions, ignoring the unique subjectivity of religious traditions, mutual subjectivity could become hidden. This approach is supported especially by theologians with a Christocentric view such as Cobb, and other evangelical theologians such as McGrath and Moltmann.

For instance, McGrath criticises religious pluralism, which concentrates on commonalities of religious traditions.

²³ To study equality seems also important particularly in racially or culturally conflicting situations (See Alim's (2005) Black Language in White Public Space, Gumperz's Interethnic Communication).

Discussion about religious pluralism has been seriously hindered by a well-meaning but ultimately spurious mindset, which is locked into the ‘we’re all saying the same thing really’ worldview, which suppresses or evades the differences between faiths in order to construct some artificial theory, which accounts for commonalities. The deliberate suppression or evasion of differences is academically unacceptable, and cannot be tolerated by any concerned to do justice to the religions of the world as they are viewed by their own adherents, rather than in the artificially reconstructed versions of these faiths, which emerge from the homogenising tendencies of scholars of religion (McGrath 1996:215).

Likewise, Cobb believes that the reason why one religion is recognised as true religion is that it has peculiarity. This peculiarity is very different from other religious traditions. In this sense, other religions are the other, according to Levinas’ theory. Thus, every single religion presupposes and serves the ultimate truth. Mutual communication is based upon mutual peculiarity therefore, for Cobb, this difference between religious traditions is important for describing mutual communication. This is not because religious communication is possible for the commonalities between religious traditions, but because it is possible for the differences between different religious cultures. Cobb (1990c:81-94) claims that when we stress “each other’s peculiarities, we can learn these differences, then communication might become more productive”. In this sense Cobb’s communication is founded upon mutual subjectivity

The aim of mutual communication is not to propose new alternative ideas, which ignore mutual subjectivity and its language, but it is that mutual languages have to flow mutually. It should be neither a way of selecting of one the alternatives, nor a compromising way of communication, which just concentrates on finding common ground, and it should not be an irresponsible religious pluralism. On the contrary, it must be a process of finding the value of the other. There is a problem when Christianity dwells just inside of boundaries, but its purpose of over-crossing boundaries should not also result in losing its identity and peculiarity. Regarding communication in mutual space, Christianity has to initiate communication by itself to over-cross boundaries toward the other in mutual space, and finally to return, having discovered and learnt new grounds. Nevertheless, when Christianity ignores its subjectivity in mutual space to search for commonalities with other religious traditions, it induces inadequate religious pluralism. On this, Jung insists that inter-religious dialogue includes the possibility of dismantlement of Christianity (Jung J.H 2004:14)

2.3.3.3.1.2 Dynamic nature of intercultural and inter-religious communication

In considering the dynamic nature of intercultural communication in mutual space, mutual subjectivity becomes an essential foundation with new meaning. As we already noted, the stress on self-subjectivity has been restored in Western history, or has been made a segregated philosophical and historical structure. The Christian attitude toward other religious and cultural traditions is not different as Christians are conflicting with other traditions all over the world. Recognising mutual subjectivity will create a turning point in the mutual communication between cultural and religious traditions. The meaning of mutual subjectivity for the Christian does not just consist of recognising the other as subject, but regarding the other subject as a target of devotion in the dynamic meaning of intercultural communication.

Furthermore, the dynamic nature in both the *perichoretic* relation within the Trinity God and intercultural communication is explained as mutual penetrating. Mutual penetrating opens mutual space, and this continual communication in the mutual space is a substance of the dynamic nature of intercultural communication. The dynamic nature is founded upon the humiliated love and devotion of the Trinity God through Jesus' incarnation.

To understand the foundation of the dynamic nature from a viewpoint of intercultural communication, we shall make recourse to Levinas for re-illumination. We shall attempt to answer the question; what does continual penetrating mean from the viewpoint of intercultural communication?

In Western philosophy, a human being becomes the subject because he not only stands in the position of subject toward the World, but also that he sees the World as an object over which he can rule. Thus, the best form human existence is not contemplated life toward the World, but a practical life that processes reality. In the context of Christianity, it is not *praxis* of conquest, but *praxis* of devotion with love and free will. For Kang Y.A (2005: 86, 88), after the modern era, the function of the subject is understood as the foundation or ground to sustain the other and the real role of the subject is to accept, love, and be devoted to the other.

The subject appearing in *totality and infinity* is the subject who is responsible for the other's burdens. It is substitution when the subject becomes the obligatory subject to the other and it is heteronymous and similar to Jesus' substitutionary work for the other; it can be said that he switched places with the other. Even if one's position is passive, after accepting the switch, then follows *praxis*, which one accepts as own responsibility. Kang refers to this as "an infinity

responsibility” (:91).

The substance of Jesus Christ is understood as the subject who takes the other’s burden and every obligatory subject of the *other* is regarded as a messianic being. The expression of Isaiah “here I am, send me” (Isa 6:8) is the devotion of himself when the absolute *Other* calls him as a passive subject. The important thing here is that he does not set himself up as the nominative, but considers his stance in the objective, responding toward the calling. Response, hospitality, and responsibility is self-giving and self-sacrifice. The response of this calling to the other is two ways. One of them is to accept this call to live a dynamic life of devotion to the other following the incarnational life of Jesus. The other way is to live segregate from the other, living selfishly and closing the door of one’s house. In Levinas’ theory, this is “evil and sin” (:92-100). The dynamic nature of intercultural communication shows us that in intercultural communication, Christianity has to be a responsible subject. Therefore, to open communication with other religious traditions involves *praxis*, which dynamically shows them incarnational devotion and self-giving. Thus, intercultural communication is a matter of life and its contents and ultimate goal are found in *praxis*. How then, is this *praxis* of intercultural communication practised in mutual space?

i. Becoming a human being; seeing with the eye

“Being in encounter is a being in which one man looks the other in the eye” (Barth 1960: 250). The meaning of Barth’s statement is that the human person is such a being who cannot see him without the eyes of another. “When one looks the other in the eye, it takes place automatically that he lets the other look him the eye...to see the other thus means directly to let oneself be seen by him” (Kang Y.A 2005:250). Barth’s idea that fundamentally, the human being has to be reflected through the other is connected to the openness of the other. Therefore, “I am as Thou art is basically fulfilled in the fact that I am not closed to thee but open... and as we do this, I am not for myself, but for thee, and Thou for me, so that we have a share and interest in one another. This two-sided openness is in the first element of humanity” (Barth 1960:251).

What then is the openness of a human being toward the other based on and what is the implication for intercultural communication? First, it is useful to consider that Barth’s idea of communicating with the other on equal footing is founded on revelation theology. He notes that “Jesus as the second Adam stood with God for human being to cut the covenant, Jesus as

representative for all human being faced God” (Barth 1960:215). In other words, Jesus faced God, humiliating himself for human beings. This openness is premised on equality but our openness is not acquired by our righteousness, but by the humiliation of Jesus. Consequently, in intercultural communication, nobody can reign over the other. In De Wit’s principle, “we are all equal but we are not all alike, and this very multi-coloredness makes intercultural Bible reading such an enriching experience” (De Wit 2004:372). Wit’s equality is based on plurality but the equality of Christianity for the openness toward the other in the communicational phase differs fundamentally; it is based on *praxis* of devotion and sacrifice. For the disciples of Jesus therefore, to open the mutual space is to practice the model of Jesus’ *praxis*. In this sense, Christian mission is not a Crusade way, but the spirit of the Cross, which contains devotion and sacrifice.

ii. Reciprocal visibility

Being in encounter consists in the fact that there is mutual speech and hearing (Barth 1960:252). Mutuality compromises the relation between the one who speaks to and the one who listens to the other. Openness of encounter is an indispensable first step, but “openness alone is not guaranteed that I reach thee and Thou me, that there is thus a real encounter. Openness, seeing, and being seen, is always a receptive and not a spontaneous happening. By mere seeing we either do not know one another at all or only imperfectly” (:253). Thus, this spontaneity is the premise of dialogue but the spontaneity is not for measuring or judging the other by one’s own standards in the encountering phase. When one is measuring the other, and the other is judging me, actually I am seeing the feature of the other through the feature that I judged. It becomes impossible to communicate this way because:

I do not hear him if I assume that he is only concerned about himself, either to commend himself to me, or to gain my interest, and that he makes himself conspicuous and understandable, forcing himself and his being upon me ...As hearers, we can find only what we seek. From this standpoint, a dialogue begins only what the hearers are concerned about themselves, about the removal of their own difficulty in respect of the other, do that the words of the other are received and welcomed as a help in this embarrassment (:255, 259).

Barth’s solution to the problem is the concern to hear the other. However, we reckon here that this is not enough, and suggest that humbleness be considered as a solution.

The principle of humbleness is traced to the incarnation of Jesus who as God, the absolute *Other*, became the *Other*. Jesus as the *Others* listens to and talks to us, to enter into us. He talks to us from a position of weakness. The principle of humbleness is based on this. What does this humbleness mean in intercultural communication? It is a practical concern for the *other*. Jesus' humbleness is not based on mere speech, but his communication is to let us know what his word means to us, why it has become life to us.

Similarly, our communication should not be public relations for ourselves, or a briefing to confirm our position in the society; our speech has to be expressed through the exhaustive practical concern for the other. It is possible through our humble concern that the other then becomes involved in our communication. As a result, only the one who humbles himself ahead of others can lead the communication. In the story of the Samaritan woman, we see an example in Jesus, who breaks a Jewish taboo by coming to the woman because of a spiritual concern her, and the Samaritan woman responds to Jesus (John 4). Jesus approached this woman in the spirit of humbleness.

iii. Mutual assistance

Being in encounter consists in the fact that we render mutual assistance in the act of being (:260).

Barth understood that the openness and the *I* and the *Thou*, or the reciprocal visibility, are a sort of premise for mutual assistance. This is a higher step of humanity. While reciprocal visibility and 'becoming a human being' are regarded as attitudes to the other, mutual assistance is more practical than these two. The commonality between Barth and Levinas for the relation between the subject and the other is that mutual assistance is a practice of response toward the calling of the other's face.

For Levinas the other is the responsible object for the subject. On the other hand, Barth based on revelation theology, called for substantial segregation between the subject and the other, and did in the matter of responsibility. For Barth, the relation of mutual assistance is living 'with' the other. "As we see one another and speak and listen to one another, we call to one another for assistance. As man, as the creature of God, man needs this assistance, and can call for it. And as man, as the creature of God, he is able and ordained to render assistance to his fellow man and to

receive it from him. God alone... has no need of assistance" (:262). Thus in mutual assistance, we cannot be '*I*.' In this sense, the relation of mutual assistance is to live 'with' the other. This is not different from Bonhoeffer's idea of we are not 'for' the other, but 'with' the other. Again, we stress that Christian mission is life with the other.

For our purpose, a crucial question is; what does mutual assistance mean and how can it be practised? Additionally, what does living with the other mean? First, mutual assistance has a double connotation; it is not a dimension of relief neither is it a temporary event. According to Levinas' notion of facing the other, the implication is that the one who gives assistance already exists as a receiver. When one accepts and serves the other, the self-subjectivity of authentic meaning or the subjectivity of service, is erected. Self-identity as the subject is not to set oneself up through insistence but to recognise the other through assistance and service. Thus, to assist the other, is to help oneself.

Viewed this way, the significance of Christianity in intercultural communication is the *praxis* of a life of service. The content of the life with the other is encountering the people in situations of pain, loneliness, and difficulty. The content of *praxis* of intercultural communication is the handling of the need, not as an event but as life. This has its foundation in the awareness that our Jesus is always with us, and so is the Holy Spirit. He knows and supplies our need because he is with us.

iv. Mutual gladness

Being in encounter consists in the fact that all the occurrence which we have so far described as the basic form of humanity stands under the sign that it is done on both sides with gladness. We gladly see and are seen; we gladly speak and listen; we gladly receive and offer assistance (Barth 1960: 265).

Although all this may take place, there is an 'unseen lacuna' which can be appreciated; Barth refers to this as 'inward element' or 'secret of humanity', that is gladly. "The alternative to gladly is not reluctantly, but neutrally - which means that I am free to choose between *gladly* and *reluctantly*" (:266). This term 'gladly' demands my free will. For Levinas, this free will is for endless responsibility (1985:96-7); for Barth, it is authentic humanity. Therefore, Levinas argued "Diachrony before all dialogue" (:97) which stresses the importance of the priority of diachrony. The emphasis is that the subject is not a being for himself but for the other (:97). When the

subject serves the other, he can enjoy authentic gladness. This ‘spontaneous acceptance’ or ‘inner yes’ or ‘willing participation’ is applicable to this free will, and Barth refers to it as secret, and it can guarantee the authentic gladness which does not have heteronomy.

Where then can we find this genuine gladness? The community of Jesus is our model. There were always feasts in the places Jesus visited; all people, without conditional limitation of culture and religion, were invited to the table with Jesus. Truth and life exist in relationship, therefore, anyone who has a fundamental inclination toward openness, is invited into the lively relationship with God by Jesus without cultural religious differences. This feast has no temporary character but guarantees a mutual sociability and dynamic communication, thereby fulfilling mutual need through this. Thus, when we serve dynamically in the feast, which can be designated as the mutual space in intercultural communication, Christianity will demonstrate authentic gladness, and conversely, the other can find this gladness in the life of Jesus. This feast is symbolised in the Kingdom of God. The feast in the Kingdom of God does not open without guests, everyone, even the one, who does not deserve to be invited, is welcomed. Those who are invited here have a relationship; they speak and listen to one another, and have a relationship of mutual assistance. As a result, the truth in the learning procedure is revealed, and people are filled with gladness because of the revelation. However, this revelation of the truth is not forced; it is based on a real communicational relationship. Consequently, when the other goes through a “come and see” (Jn 1:46) experience of Jesus’ feast, he experiences the freedom of truth that will change his life. We can see an example in the story of Zacchaeus (Lk 19:1-10); his life changed after he found gladness in the truth.

Accordingly, this way of communication can overcome the weakness of exclusivism; has a more flexible form than the communication premised on the tolerance of the other, which is inclusivism. Intercultural communication is a dialogue based on the *praxis* of devotion, and this makes it different from communication as a ‘university discipline’ or ‘academic discipline’; it includes every realm of life, and not just intellectual communication.

2.3.3.1.3 Contextual nature of intercultural communication - existential determination

While we considered the historical transformation process of contextual theologies, we have also examined the appearance of global theology, which has its solicitude in theological and regional dichotomies. According to Nicholls (1979:64), genuine contextualisation always has “a dynamic

tension between the super-cultural universals of the church, common to churches worldwide and the cultural variables peculiar to each national church”. However, as note earlier contextuality in intercultural communication has some more connotations than the dynamic equivalence of Kraft, or the dynamic tension of Nicholls. This is the communication of incarnational humiliation and the *praxis* of devotion between mutual subjects. This way of communication cannot insist on ‘me’ for mutual subjectivity but it is an authentic dynamic communication, which is expected with faith in the normal life. The normal life also implies that the dynamic devotional life operates in the public place.

When we remark that the characters of intercultural communication are the mutual subjectivity, contextuality, and dynamic nature, the assumption is that mutual subjectivity opens and guarantees the space for communication, and the dynamic nature as the meaning of continual devotion shows the purpose, implication, and means for communication of the Christian way. Now the role of contextuality in intercultural communication is to show how we live our lives in a variable context, as if the situation is being monitored on a huge and multi screen. What this means is that, the role of contextuality is to monitoring the lives we live in the variable mutual space. Contextuality demands something from the one who lives in the context of mutual communication and its requirement of us becomes its very meaning in the space of intercultural communication.

Here, we shall begin to examine the relation between variable context and universality. No one can be free from contextuality, since every theology is a contextual theology. The notion of contextual theology contains not only the Third World theologies, but also the theologies of the First World, which derives its feedback from the former. Hence, contextual theology is a theological inheritance that identifies gospel and culture through the imperialistic way of mission; it passes through the de-Westernised gospel and recognises that Western theologies also stand beside others. This idea of contextual theology does not limit the norm of contextual theology to the Third World, but expends it to the First World. Through the echoes of Third World theologies, the so-called Western theologies earn self-reflection. It is not anymore a touchstone to test others’ legitimacy but to find self-identity and realise that they are also standing beside the other.

Consequently, genuine universality does not reject contextuality, but stimulates it, adding abundance to diversity. Genuine contextuality is opened toward the other’s contextualities and

universality. In this regard, the meaning of contextuality in intercultural and intracultural communication is the process, which overcomes regional and theological dichotomies and confirms the mutual subjectivity and identity of each local religious tradition. In support of this view, Bosch (1991:456-7) alludes to “the theological osmosis, which takes place in local churches”. What is the requirement of contextuality to one who lives in the intercultural space, if we consider that the variability and diversity of contextuality does not conflict with the universality of Christianity in the intercultural communication and the intercultural communication means the communication of incarnational humiliation and *praxis* of devotion?

When we express the necessity of contextuality to cope with cultural transform, it is an attempt to recover the substance of incarnation. The incarnated Jesus himself, who came to us, is understandably, the model of contextualisation. The contextual model of Jesus opens new challenges to intercultural communication. This contextuality is not just intellectual work in the intercultural communication; it also requires existential resolutions from us every moment. Recognising contextuality means removing our safety pin in the mutual space, accepting the existential tension, and living by faith in the mutual space. Thus, recognising contextuality in the mutual space has some dangerous implications; in many cases, it has tended to usher theologians into religious pluralism.

Ironically, dynamic participation is needed to avoid this jeopardy, that is to say, genuine contextuality is possible with the theological approach of ‘doing’,²⁴ but this has to include dogmatic dialogue. Insistence on contextuality in the *praxis* does not promote regional and theological dichotomies, and it is the key to sustain the essence of contextuality without losing the way of communication to the ambiguous religious pluralism in intercultural communication. Jesus invited his disciples to “come and see” (Jn 1:46). Contextuality in the mutual space, which recognises variability, needs the dynamic life of Jesus. The genuineness of the contextuality clarifies when the people are following Jesus’ invitation and when they are not. As Levinas mentions, the subject as passive respondent actively accepts the invitation of Jesus with an infinite obligation in the mutual space, then as a responsible subject he lives the life, which the existential resolution requires, day after day.²⁵ This mutual subjective, contextual and

²⁴ Inch in his book, *Doing Theology across Cultures*, stresses the importance of the servanthood of each Christian living in a cross-cultural context. However, he could not make specific statements on how the dialogical context of Christians can impact on their servanthood.

²⁵ Here, the requirement of contextuality relates with the ‘Theology of Cross’ which originates from Apostle Paul, and is influenced by Barth, Bonhoeffer, Moltmann and even, liberation theology. When we consider it as a specific way of life, this theology means to accept pain, difficulties that the Cross includes,

dynamic intercultural communication leads us to the last question, that is the matter of mutual identity and this is inevitably taken up for discussion in the communication of mutual subjects.

2.3.4 Mutual identity

2.3.4.1 Introduction

Mutual communication in mutual space is directly ushered into the matter of mutual identity. As we have observed, the main question for the existing manner of the Divine Trinity in the relationship of *perichoresis* is to find the un-syncretised way of the identity of the Trinity curbing monotheistic challenges.²⁶ In respect of the Christian mission, this question causes solicitude of syncretism between Christianity and other religious traditions. In dealing with intercultural communication, the issue of syncretism should be examined.

Concerning the purpose and limitation of intercultural communication, certain questions need to be addressed. Are mutual transformation and mutual learning the purpose of intercultural communication? If the answer is yes, does the ultimate goal of dialogue help and boost the other in the religious traditions to be sincere or to be converted? If the ultimate goal of communication is conversion, is there a hidden agenda associated with the term when theologians criticise inclusivism? If not, are there alternative meanings of the term conversion? If mutual identity recognises its legitimacy through *praxis*, then the existing way, which is based on the commonalities in intercultural communication, cannot attain validity through that way. Below, we shall critically examine theocentric and Christocentric attempts at ensuring legitimacy through commonalities of each religious tradition.

2.3.4.2 The uniqueness of incarnation and the challenges of theocentric religious pluralism

When *The Myth of God Incarnate* edited by Hick was published, it was apparent that this book

and to bear the cross in the existential life of the world. According to this theology, the right life in a community of disciples does not guarantee an escape from encountering the world, but enables one to overcome it with the Cross. From the standpoint of this theology, it is the dynamic life overcomes the difficulties of the world with the sacrificial devotion and love of the Cross and opens the space to the world. In the mutual space, the requirement of contextuality toward us is the existential resolution of the sacrificial devotion and love toward the *other*.

²⁶ Gavin D'Costa agrees that "the Trinity safeguards against an exclusivistic particularism (Christomonism) and a pluralist universalism (theocentricism) in that it stipulates against an exclusive identification of God and Jesus, as well as against a non-identification of God and Jesus" (1990:18).

has some sort of theological intention, and from that time, it became a preface to a series of study. The concern of this book was not only the issue of narrow Christology, but also about whether the question of the finality of Christ is central to Christianity or not. In other words, to the question is; how can we apply the finality and uniqueness of Jesus to proclaim that Jesus is the only saviour of the world, and to proof the superiority of Christianity above other religious traditions?

A more strategic and ultimate goal for this debate is shown more clearly in Hick's *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness* in 1987. Subsequently, a bunch of theological group whose ideas were similar to Hick's, emerged (cf. Knitter, Kaufmann, Panikkar and Samartha etc). Even if their approaches to the matter are diverse, they were based on the same challenge. As a criticism of traditional Christology, this Christology offers the foundation of a dominant position above other religious traditions, and it makes it drastically impossible to communicate with others. Hick's theology is 'partnership theology', as expressed in his subtitle, *The Rainbow of Faiths* in *Christian Theology of Religions* (Lochhead 1988:25). He deprives Christianity of its only uniqueness, the messianic position of Jesus, in the interest of inter-religious peace. For this 'peace between religions', he gave up the Christian's core-messianic position of Jesus, stating that:

He (Jesus) most probably thought of himself as the final prophet...he may – but on the other hand, he may very possibly not -have thought of himself as the messiah or as the Danielic son of man who was to appear on the clouds of heaven: though the Jesus movement after his death, and after the event that we call his resurrection, adopted both of these ideas and eventually fused them together (Hick 1995:91).

This challengeable statement is based on this problematic question:

If Jesus was literally God incarnate, and if it is by his death alone that men can be saved and by their response to him alone that they can be appropriate that salvation, then the only doorway to eternal life is Christian faith. It would follow from this that the large majority of the human race so far have not been saved. But is it credible that the loving God and Father of all men have decreed that only those born within one particular thread of human history shall be saved? Is not such an idea excessively parochial, presenting God in effect as the tribal deity of the predominately Christian West? (1977:180)

His purpose is about the relation of the finality of Jesus and universal salvation, and the

paradoxical contradiction of it.

In Hick's view, the incarnation of Jesus is not something to abolish, but to understand mythologically instead of literally. Incarnation of God for him is actualisation into history, the *agape* of God. Jesus opened and responded to God accomplishing God's will and incarnated that human ideal.

Thus, the central point surrounding incarnation is whether to see it from a religious pluralistic view or as the final event. The biggest challenge of the historical relativism toward Christianity is the suspicion of the finality of the incarnation of Jesus. The assertion of historical relativism that all historical reality is relativistic is contradicted by the confirmation of Jesus' finality and normativity. The modification of Christology is called for, but it is not a resignation of the finality of incarnation. For Hick, Knitter, and Panikkar etc., the new assignment for Christology is how Christianity can sustain the uniqueness in terms of incarnation without the assertion that Christ is final and is normative to other religious saviours. Thus, these theologians re-interpret incarnation in various ways. While Hick distinguishes between *totum Dei* and *totus Deus* to assert theocentric Christology, Panikkar re-interprets the finality of incarnation by distinguishing between a universal and a special Jesus.

For Panikkar, Christ cannot be restricted to historical reality, but a cosmo-theocentric reality. He claims that the traditional assertion that incarnation occurred only in Jesus is not correct because Christ realised His final 'messiahship' through all possible agents. For this reason, the proposition 'Christ is Jesus' is not same as 'Jesus is Christ.' Knitter names this new finality as 'relational uniqueness' (Knitter 1996:98).²⁷ Nevertheless, this relational uniqueness asserts Jesus' finality, even though this finality is confirmed by the capacity to relate with other final figures in the other religions. The approach is no longer addicted to the normative and finality of an exclusive understanding of Jesus; instead it is seen in terms of a theocentric view.

The concern of theocentric theology of incarnation is how Christianity can communicate with other religious traditions, respecting their truth, but simultaneously recognising the uniqueness of Jesus. Even if theologians have different ways of approaching religious pluralism, the commonality of pluralistic approach toward the finality and normativity of Jesus is to find

²⁷ Instead of exclusive and inclusive finality of incarnation, he suggests relational uniqueness, which means critical explanation through dialogue with other religious tradition and opening ourselves to re-examination and demonstration.

common messianic image, which could be universally accepted to all religious traditions. The main concern is not really Jesus' finality or normativity itself, but to find common image in the dialogue phase.²⁸

Kuschel (1994:135-54) states that, in order "to find common images the understanding of incarnation as religious pluralistic alternative has five basic structures". Firstly, if considered epistemologically, it starts with the discernment that all events and knowledge have historical relativity. Therefore, ultimate languages and methods in the natural condition cannot exist, and any conclusive place for the ultimate truth does not exist. Secondly, the truth of God is far different from what human insight can attain. Hence, the divine nature cannot be grasped and mentioned ultimately, but can only be understood by conceptions and as a secret, which cannot be touched by human beings.

What this implies is that no religion or revelation can contain the final and ultimate truth of God. One ultimate assertion limits God and denies His secret. Thirdly, diverse religious phenomena are various expressions of the eternal being. If we regard this idea, then, the exclusive notion of traditional incarnation should disappear. Fourthly, if no religion, revelation or saviour can be a spokesperson of God's secret, Christianity has to be grasped as part of a religious pluralistic system. For this reason, the church needs a Copernican revolution²⁹ in its relation with other religious traditions. Finally, pluralistic Christology does not underestimate the historical Jesus, nor refutes his finality. The stance is that Jesus is the revelation and incarnation of God but there are other revelations of God. As Knitter opines, Jesus is a window of God. We can see the secret of universe through this window and there is a possibility of the existence of another window. Can the mutual identity of the communication subjects be guaranteed through commonality of each religious tradition? Is this doctrinal disarmament effective or helpful for intercultural dialogue?

i. Critical approach to theocentric religious pluralism

²⁸ According to Knitter, in the dialogical phase, "whether the question of Jesus' uniqueness is answered, whether Jesus does or does not prove the final and normative is not, really, the central issue or the primary purpose of dialogue. The task at hand, demanded of Christianity and all religions by both the religious and the socio-political world in which they live, is that the religious speak and listen to each other, that they grow with and from each other, that they combine efforts for the welfare, the salvation, of all humanity" (Knitter 1985:231).

²⁹ This refers to the paradigm shift away from the Ptolemaic model of the heavens, which placed the earth at the centre of the universe.

Cobb agrees with theocentric theologians on the issue of overcoming exclusivism of Christianity, but criticises them for their object-centred and locally-centred pluralism. Theocentric pluralism assumes that there are certain commonalities of world religions but ignores two premises on which all religions have exclusive persistence as each one of them has its own distinctive religious phenomenon. The claim behind their premise is that it is arrogance on the part of Christianity to assume that the notion of God, which is interpreted in the light of Christ, can apply to other religions. However, no one is allowed to stand the neutrality in the history.

The epistemological structure of E. Kant causes Hick to unfold his pluralistic Christology. His epistemology distinguishes between the substance itself, which is beyond human experiences, and the phenomenal world, which the world and human being can recognise. According to this epistemology, Hick comes up with the notion of a universal God as a foundation of universal experience. He sets up the notion of a universal God, and then insists that the various world religions are phenomena, which appear in diverse cultures and histories. This view ignores the specialty of each religion, and shows an added possibility of causing conflict. Thus, there is a non-pluralistic standardised idea in his pluralistic view, which asserts genuine religious pluralism ironically.

On the other hand, Lindbeck (1984:52-5) asserts that dogma is nothing but an idiom of religious cultural community in the cultural-linguistic understanding; therefore, it is not necessary to premise the common experiences on inter-religious dialogue as Hick has done. If this proposal denies Hick's assertion that each religion has common experiences of the transcendental being, then, Hick's theological structure will be destroyed. According to Lindbeck, things discovered in diverse religions are not one same experience as diverse religions form diverse experiences. In the case of Hick, he gives up the uniqueness of incarnation of Christianity for the consolidation of the truth. Moreover, he researched this with hermeneutical approach. According to Lindbeck "all religions have only surface resemblance to other hermeneutical approaches...biblical good news or gospel is in some respects unique and untranslatable not only because of its sharable claim to universality, but also because of its peculiarities" (2002:236). Accordingly, the incarnation of Jesus is an essential peculiarity of Christianity.

2.3.4.3 Christocentric approaches

i. Critical view of Cobb's Christocentric pluralism

Earlier, our critical appraisal of theocentric pluralist approaches such as Cobb's and Moltmann's, has shown that such approaches assure the legitimacy of the identity of the subject through the commonality of religious traditions. Moreover, the effort of Cobb on Christocentric pluralism is also reflected in his way of sustaining the identity of the subject. For him, to recognise the peculiarities of religions, "the most basic assumption is that there is an essence of religion. This essence is thought to be both a common characteristic of all religions and their central or normative feature... The next step is then the one about which the consensus was to be formed" (Cobb 1990c:81), that is on the level of 'common sense'. In the Buddhist tradition, there is no religious trait of the worship of a Supreme Being or Deity as in the Abrahamic faiths, but nobody excludes Buddhism from the world religions because the religious essence is present in Buddhism. Cobb explains further with an example of the role of Buddhism and Confucianism in China and inquires, "what of their relative value and validity? They coexisted there through many centuries, not primarily as alternate routes to the same goal, but as complementary... Confucianism took care of public affairs, while Buddhism dealt with the inner life" (:83).

Cobb's definition is "that each religious tradition has its own nature and purposes and the roles of religious elements within it" (:84). In other words, Cobb recognises the peculiarities of each religious tradition, and the truth that each religion has plays a role in mutual assistance. He assumes that with the roles of each religious tradition comes its peculiarities, and through this, it can help the whole society. Thus, Cobb sustains the plurality or relative value of the world religions.

Fundamentally, his effort has a default in that it makes the subjectivity of the identity relative. For Cobb, the purpose of Christianity is to contribute to peace among religions instead of the "arrogance and offensive efforts to proselytise". As Christians what we consider in intercultural communication is not to exclude or give up the core identity of Christianity, which includes proselytism, or to pursue peace in-between religions, but methodological issues for mission in keeping the identity of Christianity. As we have already suggested, it is possible through the dynamic *praxis* of devotion in the mutual space.

ii. Critical appraisal of Christocentric inclusivism

In the foregoing, we have made mention of Christocentric approaches to pluralism. Other representative theories of the Christocentric inclusivism are ‘the fulfilment theology’ by Henri de Lubac and Jean Danielou, ‘the anonymous Christian’ by Karl Rahner, and ‘Christocentric Trinitarianism’ by G. D’Costa etc. In this section, we shall critically examine Karl Rahner’s notion of ‘the anonymous Christian’, and his analysis of the identity of the subject. Rahner was a member of a consultative committee of the second Vatican Council and he attempts to re-interpret the traditional doctrine of salvation, which does not allow salvation outside the church. His notion of ‘anonymous Christian’ includes all human beings who have a spiritual condition but have no chance to listen the gospel yet, if they had, then they would have gladly accepted it. This idea was accepted by the Council, and *Redemptor Hominis* in 1979 announced that; “each one is included in the mystery of the Redemption and with each one Christ has united himself for ever through the mystery” (Paul, John II:41). Finally, it confirms the universality of salvation.

According to Rahner, the idea of the ‘anonymous Christian’ is based on the universal will of God:

If, on the one hand, we conceive salvation as something specially *Christian*... God has really, truly, and seriously intended this salvation for all men – then these two aspects cannot be reconciled in any other way than by stating that every human being is really truly exposed to the influence of divine, supernatural grace which offers an interior union with God and by means of which God communicates himself whether the individual takes up an attitude of acceptance or of refusal towards this grace (Rahner 1966:123).

He established a Christocentric inclusivism based on the universal will of God and the notion of ‘the anonymous Christian’. His theological hermeneutics toward other religions has a few theses. Firstly, Rahner declares Christianity as the absolute religion stating that; “Christianity understands itself as the absolute religion, intended for all men, which cannot recognise any other religion beside itself as of equal right” (Rahner 1966:118). According to him, Christianity cannot be overtaken or surpassed by other religions because Christianity is established by Jesus Christ who is the summit of God’s salvific will. Rahner does not make Christianity stand in the same line with other religions.

Secondly, he argues that after Christianity entered into the world, the legitimacy of all other major religions was abolished:

Until the moment when the gospel really enters into the historical situation of the individual, a non-Christian religion does not merely contain elements of a natural knowledge of God, elements, moreover, mixed up with human depravity which is the result of original sin and later aberrations. It contains also supernatural elements arising out of grace, which is given to men as a gratuitous gift on account of Christ. For this reason, a non-Christian religion can be recognised as a lawful religion (although only in different degrees) without thereby denying the error and depravity contained in it (:121).

The statement shows that he recognises the supernatural grace of God among other religions but his conditional phrase, 'although only in different degrees', has relative or qualitative differences.

Thirdly, he claims that "Christianity does not simply confront the member of an extra-Christian religion as a mere non-Christian but as someone who can and must already be regarded in this or that respect as an anonymous Christian" (:131). Thus, proclamation of the gospel does not mean proselytism of other religions, but it ushers 'the anonymous Christian' into the deeper reality of grace and salvation.

The humanistic Christology of Rahner is interested in the legitimacy of Jesus in the religious pluralistic phase as including other religions but laying emphasis on Jesus. He suggests that Jesus be regarded as the ideal or model for all human beings that is perfectly accorded with God in the world. However, this approach has some weak points. The question about which Jesus is saviour can be brought up in humanistic Christology because in this Christology, fundamental differences between human beings and Jesus are not recognised, but only relatively. According to Rahner, while human beings are beings in search of their own genuine substance, Jesus is the being who fulfilled the essence of the human being. Schleimacher also follows a similar approach claiming that while we as humans have a dim God-consciousness, Jesus has complete God-consciousness. Tillich also remarks that while we in the existential being are alienated from our own genuine essence, Jesus is the 'new being' who is one with the genuine essence of human beings.

If the fundamental difference between human beings and Jesus is not distinguished, we will come across the question of whether or not Jesus' crucifixion, resurrection and life mean anything to our salvation. If his salvific life and work for us were just completion of things, which happened in human affairs, then Jesus is the ideal or completed form of all human beings.

The weakness of the divinity of the Jesus of the Christocentric inclusivism makes the identity of the subject dim in the mutual space.

2.3.4.4 Holistic approach to mutual identity

We shall briefly consider the ways to relate the theories of exclusivism, inclusivism, and religious pluralism to incarnational love, which is the core of Christian identity. Even if the methods of each of them are different, they all reach the same conclusion. Although they may approach the core of Christian identity (incarnational love of God), theoretically, we already have seen that they have crucial defects in terms of the identity of the subject. The theocentric approach attempts to solve the matter of mutual identity by ensuring the legitimacy of the subject through a search for the commonality of messianic images between religious traditions. The Christocentric pluralism of Cobb and Christocentric inclusivism both address inter-religious peace by evaluating the identity of Christianity relatively. However, we have noted that we cannot solve the matter of mutual identity by finding the commonality of messianic images between religious traditions or through the relativistic subjectivity.

Consequently, we hereby suggest the holistic method of incarnation as a way out of the problem. The key in this method is the balance of the historicity and actualisation³⁰, that is to say, Christian identity guarantees legitimacy when the historicity of Christianity is practised dynamically through the actualisation in the mutual space.

i. Ways to the core identity of Christianity

We can find a common denominator in exclusivism, inclusivism, and religious pluralism, that is, incarnation is God's love and humiliation. However, approaches to this are all different.

On the part of Barth, his arguments begin with the precedence of Jesus as God. He stresses that the subject of incarnation is God Himself and incarnation comes from the love of God toward the world. Hence, Jesus who is eternally precedent as God humiliates Himself for the salvation of the world. "His humiliation is understood as the act of God historically (*Geschichte*), and also existentially" (Ott 1983:247).

³⁰ I used this word, the actualization, to stress the dynamic character of incarnation presently.

In the case of Rahner, he also understands incarnation as the culmination of God's love and humiliation for human beings. In this proposition, while God is unchangeable for Himself, God changed Himself for the other; God becomes the other through conversion, and the conversion of God is self-humiliation. This implies that God transfers Himself; He becomes a human being. God comes from Himself, and then exists as fullness giving Himself. According to Rahner, God's variability is not an indication of His lack, but the climax of the perfection of God. In spite of God's infiniteness and perfectibility, He can be converted; he can become the most humble being. This is a condition of incarnation; it is an expression of the unchangeable love of God.

In Hick's metaphorical and mythological theory of incarnation, the myth of incarnation does not abolish the subject, but accepts it metaphorically, and then it can be understood as the language of love. Hick considers that the nature of God is to fulfil His love (*Agape*); therefore, incarnation is the actualisation in history of *Agape*. Jesus openly incarnated the ideal of humanity responding to God's will, and also incarnated God's limitless love which is reflected restrictively through His contributive life. Hick's book, *The Second Christianity* deals with the process of demythologisation of traditional understanding of incarnation. Specifically he argues that we cannot prove God, but we have to focus on His humiliated love. The important thing is that the spirit of love is incarnated in Jesus because Jesus is devoted to others, sharing all things.

ii. Integrality: historicity guaranteed by the actualisation of incarnation

Even if these approaches reach the same conclusion, which is God's humiliated love as the meaning of incarnation, we cannot ignore the historicity and peculiarity, which is the foundation of the identity of Christianity, by considering only the existential meaning of love and humiliation.

According to Kim K.S (1993:10-7), "A theocentric theologian recognises the meaning of incarnation, but ignores the historicity of incarnation itself, makes it relative, and then denies the super-historicity". Every religion exists according to relative truth, and none of them can represent the absolute truth of God. Therefore, the problem is that the discussion about the uniqueness and the finality of incarnation of Christianity becomes meaningless. The historicity of incarnation is also ignored or considered relative in the Christocentric approaches because the differences between human beings and Jesus is not on a vertical dimension, but horizontal. On

the other hand, in the exclusivistic line, while they recognise the historicity of incarnation, there is a possibility of the danger of ignoring the actualisation of incarnation. It means that this approach can stress only the absoluteness of this doctrine, leaving the present meaning of incarnation and incarnational life out of account. Therefore, incarnation has to be understood simultaneously in the context of historicity and existential actualisation.

This is a foundation of the holistic understanding of incarnation. The historicity of incarnation might stress the uniqueness and finality of Christianity, simultaneously the existential actualisation stresses the dynamic character of incarnation, which is revealed presently in the Christian life through the Holy Spirit. If we interpret this into dialogical language, the subject does not find his identity until the encounter with the other through the incarnational life (*praxis* of devotion) in the mutual space. Then he discovers the authentic identity repeatedly whenever he returns to the mutual space with the commandment of 'with'. The question arises: Who is the being to empower us to return to mutual space? The answer is the Holy Spirit. D'Costa (1990:19) explains that; "the doctrine of the Holy Spirit allows us theologically to relate the particularity of Christ event to the entire history of humankind".

The historicity of incarnation is accomplished through self-limitation, self-revelation, and self-humiliation. The idea is that Jesus' limitation of Himself does not exclude His humanity, but comes through the human nature. Nevertheless, this is not the same as inclusivism, which has a horizontal and metaphysical understanding of Jesus. Jesus is the revelation of God and the revelator. He is not a discoverer of God or a religious pioneer but through His humiliation, God reveals Himself to the world and shows genuine love through Jesus. For Moltmann, he understood incarnation as an emergency counter-plan of God. The meaning of historicity is not just incarnation as a genuine historical event, but it is the finality.

The existential actualisation has its basis in the spontaneous love of God in His and humiliation. This love through the humiliation of God has to appear in the Christian life dynamically through the Holy Spirit. Incarnation is the life of Jesus, the truth and the model for all Christians.³¹ The purpose of the incarnation of Jesus is the actualisation of the kingdom of God. In following the model of Jesus' incarnational mission, the mission field is the kingdom of God. The place that the Word appears is the very place of incarnation, the appearance of incarnational life is the actualisation of incarnation. Consequently, the actualisation includes the meaning of

³¹ In the pluralistic view, incarnation is just the first example or key to open the actualization of incarnation, not the final and historical event.

eschatological transcendency and the dynamic character for it means that for the Christian today, it has to be presently experienced as the same. As Bonhoeffer states, we start to find the presence of Jesus in our world, the actualisation does not only include today's interpretation of Jesus, but is also an indication of the Christian life which appears through incarnational *praxis*.

The *sui generis* (finality) of incarnation is continually working in us through the Holy Spirit and its meaning should also be revealed presently through the life of the Christian. This *sui generis* of incarnation and the actualisation, which is revealed through the Christian life are not confrontational. The legitimacy of its historicity can be guaranteed upon the actualisation of incarnation. This means that the actualisation of the incarnation appears in the dynamic incarnational life of the Christian in the mutual space, for the first time (*a posteriori*).³² As a result, the identity of Christianity is presently revealed in the mutual space in the dynamic relationship of the '*with*'. This '*with*' always comes to us with a sort of burden of the one who lives in the mutual space. It means that love is the subject of incarnation, which invites us to live in the mutual space, makes us return to our site for reflection, and then commands us to return again to the mutual space. As D'Costa notes, "God's self disclosure in Christ shows that the proper mode of being is in loving communion, exemplified in the love between the Father and the Son, and correlatively the love between the three persons of the Trinity" (:19-20).

Subsequently, incarnational life, which is the core identity of Christianity, becomes automatic in revealing the authenticity of Christian identity to the world. In conclusion, if more Christians are involved in the mutual space, then more authenticity of identity could be revealed. Living the life of '*with*' is to "put a lamp on its stand, so that those who come may see the light" (Lk 11:33). The authenticity of identity is revealed not with argument or insistence, but as recognition of the other in the encountering phase of the mutual space for there is no love without the object of love. We may yet recall Levinas' statement that "when we respond to the other, at last, the meaning of the subject is revealed, and humanlike life is to recognise others. In the encountering space with the other culture, Christian culture for the first time has a cultural identity of itself but

³² In case of D'Costa, the proper mode of inter-religious dialogue for Christians is working together with men and women from other religions for liberation from oppression and suffering in all its many forms, through this mutuality, discovering the many forms in which this oppression and suffering take place (1990:21). This has different nuance from our concern with the *perichoretic* love as the basis for intercultural dialogue, because this *perichoretic* love does not support only liberation theology. As Lochhead insists, "the representatives of different traditions may be speaking out of common concern for a social issue. Human right is a common focus for interfaith conversation (Lochhead 1988:71)," inclusivists are also caught to find common concerns if they only adhere to social affairs. The meaning of the actualization of incarnation is more comprehensive than that of inclusive understanding (or liberation theology), because it deals with mutual space holistically.

the identity of the subject without the object (the other) becomes formalised and fossilised.

2.4 Conclusion

The increased request for *meaning* among communities in the religious-cultural encountering is a result of the lived experience of the people, and radical change and conflicts with others on account of globalisation. In this regard, *meaning* is the key concept to approach others or to dialogue with other religious cultures. On the role of meaning, Ariarajah (2005:96) rightly notes that; “intercultural understanding, communication and life call for an intercultural approach to interpretation so that diverse communities are able to appreciate, adopt, and appropriate the *meaning* that arises from the interpretation”. While the voice of the needs of the churches of Asia, Africa, and Latin America for intercultural dialogue is increasing, the intercultural hermeneutics arises “out of experience, out of the need to make sense of an inter-religious reality, and out of the struggle to find *meaning* in the midst of and with the help of the religious cultural realities in which one finds oneself” (:101).

This chapter suggests that genuine intercultural hermeneutics is not only an attempt to understand (or to learn as a university discipline) the similarities, peculiarities, or commonalities of each witness, but arises from an authentic encountering in mutual space as ‘*praxis of with*’. We therefore, propose the ‘*praxis of with*’ as a key concept of intercultural hermeneutics in this chapter. The main concern of this intercultural hermeneutics is how theological and cultural identities of witnesses are constructed in religious cultural encountering. Accordingly, *perichoresis*, which is the inner foundation of *missio Dei*, mutual indwelling, mutual space, and mutual identity, is re-interpreted to construct theological and cultural identities of Christianity in intercultural theology.

CHAPTER 3

WITNESS IN KOREA

3.1 Introduction

The disputation of the religious character of ancestral rituals is primarily a key to understand the view of salvation between religions. This is a conflict of theological and cultural identities. In this chapter, our concern is not whether it is a matter of religion or not, but to investigate the possibilities of intercultural communication between Christianity and traditional religions of Korea in terms of ancestor worship. We shall evaluate mainstream studies of indigenisation in Korea concerning ancestors from the viewpoint of intercultural theology. Specifically, the *perichoretic* evaluation through mutual indwelling, mutual space, and mutual identity opens the way for communication with religious culture of Korea.

This study requires a more holistic socio-political approach. We shall investigate the socio-political context of Korea in relation to ancestral matters from the past to the present. Specifically, it is important to consider Confucianism, which influenced Korea and the Korean Church in terms of ancestral matters. The holistic understanding of gospel and culture in Korean situation and the theological and cultural identity of Korean church concerning ancestors are also closely linked with Confucianism. Most indigenous approaches to theology have to dialogue with Confucianism in the Korean context. In the shadow of Confucianism, we can utter distinctiveness of ancestor worship in Korea, and its value in Korean society.³³ Are Korean churches free from the deep-rooted meanings of Confucianism, such as filial duty, in reinterpreting matters of ancestors? We need to trace how Korean churches and Western missionaries have interpreted and applied ancestral matter in Confucian context. In addition, we need to ask how we can open mutual space concerning ancestral matters in the Korean context and how this can be dynamically actualised in the people's lives. On the long run, can we find some hopeful meaning for the Korean society and Korean churches from *perichoretic* intercultural hermeneutics?

³³ Song Hyun-dong presented his research report, which argues that the most conflicting religious matter in Korean's families is ancestor worship, at the symposium of the Korea religious studies (한국 종교학회) with the theme: The Present and the Future of the Science of Religion in Eastern Asia (동아시아 종교학의 현재와 미래). Unpublished paper (July, 2007), 15-16.

3.2 Overview of Korea

3.2.1 Korean worldview

3.2.1.1 Integral view

In the African viewpoint, the physical and the spiritual are understood integrally. Mbiti (1990: 56) notes that; “The invisible world presses hard upon the visible: one speaks of the other, and African peoples ‘see’ that invisible universe when they look at, hear, or feel the visible and the tangible world”. This means that Africans integrate the dualistic attitudes of the spiritual and the physical, the void and the matter. This integrality is demonstrated in the lives of Africans who live in the religious worldview. Koreans also have peculiar integral view that their religions, social and political structures, cultures and even economics are not to be understood dualistically, but closely connected monistically. Nevertheless, the role of religion at the centre of Korean people’s lives is not simply centripetal but also spiralled with their lives integrally. The influence of Confucianism was particularly absolute on the Korean. Ryu T.S (1978c:111) explains that; “a harmony of the *Yin* and *Yang* in Confucianism is so important that the notion of confrontation is dim. A notion of secular and sacred is not clear, so two is one, or one can be two”. This integral system of thought, which is known as ‘balance (*Johwa*),’ helps Koreans to live in integral religious society.

In the case of the *Chosên* dynasty, the secular and the religious realms are fused and mutually permeate each other so that, they are difficult to distinguish. All realms and structures of its society were controlled by Confucian values, its structure and realms have the religious warranty to regard them as sacred (Park Y.S. 1992:250). According to Bellah (1965:188, 193), “the religions and the secular were not separated in quite the same way as they are in modern societies ... perhaps Confucianism, the most archaic of the historic religions, best illustrates this tendency, especially in its central cult of the family”. For Durkheim (1915:37), the religious life is supposed to be sorted into two, the secular and the sacred one. However, the Confucian society of the *Chosên* dynasty had an integral socio-religious structure that fused both the secular and the sacred notion, and this integrality is far removed from the common Western idea.

As a result, this integrality, prescribes a social life, which relates each person with the society; the social life is expressed in the community. The community is formed from the family unit;

individuals are formed and produced by community, the family and relatives as in South African notion of *ubuntu*³⁴. Specifically, in the *Chosên* dynasty, individuals cannot exist without considering their lineage and their ancestors as the origin of their own lives and descendants that of their descendants, who will make their ancestors, survive after death through ancestral rituals. This integral worldview of the Korean in its religion oriented society creates an integrated understanding of the relationship between individuals. Ancestral ritual is centripetal to the sustenance of the integral worldview of the *Chosên* dynasty, and needs to be understood holistically in the Korean context.

3.2.1.2 Past-oriented view of time

Fortes understood ancestor rituals in general, as a desire for the dead to live continually through the worship of their descendants. It presupposes the idea that even if the dead is now physically in the other world after death, they have a certain relation with their descendants. His evaluation is that “ancestor worship is not past-oriented, but a future-oriented one” (Fortes 1976:1-16). But traditional view of time in Korea is a circular one and is always past-intended. The notion of time in Confucianism is clearly circular, so the past is more important than future. For instance, the celebration culture of the *Gabja* year, which means 60th is a significant example that the *Chosên* dynasty had a circular view of time. *Gabja* means circulation of sixty that is, once a human being lives for sixty-years, he has already lived his life once (cf. Son B.H 1996:41)

In this regard, Koreans generally celebrate *Whangab*, which means 60th birthday, blessing a new start of life. Another point, which shows that the Korean view of time is past-oriented, is attaching importance to past things including ancestors’ past way of life. For example, Confucian scholars seldom studied new things; they considered it important to follow the teachings of the sages. Ancestors who existed in the past and their teachings are still closely connected with the present life and even control the present in Confucian society. Without the past, the present could not exist. This past-oriented idea in the Confucian *Chosên* dynasty manifested as a specific feature, that is, filial duty. Ancestors and things in the past are always more respected than those of the present. This past-oriented idea appeared in as filial duty with a circular understanding that descendants have to do a filial duty for the dead ancestors. Furthermore, this past-oriented and circular view of time played a crucial role in constructing the social structure and religious belief in the *Chosên* dynasty, which transcends the dimension of

³⁴ See *Ubuntu* in 6.2.3.2 and 6.2.3.3 below.

mere filial duty. The *Silhacja* (that is, practical learners such as Jung Yack-yong), who made contact with Catholicism through China at the end of the *Chosên* dynasty, tried to reform the past-oriented world view of *Chosên* dynasty specifically through their straight view of time (cf. Son B.H 1996:43). When some of them refused to participate in ancestral rituals, they were persecuted, and this was the main reason for the long controversy between Christianity and Confucianism.

3.2.1.3 View of after death

We need to consider the view of death for the oriental norm of filial duty points out that “filial duty is to serve not only the living but also the dead ancestors” (Mêng 1996:110). The crucial reason that the traditional sacrificial rituals of Korea confronted with Christianity is different perceptions about after death. In the case of Korea, which has a naturalistic view of death, a certain relation between the dead and the living descendant is sustained. A fundamental reason for the formation of complicated customs for mourning and ritual ceremonies is all about interconnecting ceremony with a spirit of the dead. It is not understood that the spirit of the dead stays in the world of the dead, rather the dead is considered to be wandering among the living descendants. Hence, ancestral rituals are needed to comfort them, and these rituals have become a way of life, sometimes inducing fear.

In Korea, the idea of the dead has become fused with Buddhism, Confucianism, and even Christianity etc, but “it was originally based on shamanism” (Choi & Choi 2000:19). “Specifically, shamanism played an important role in providing an adequate world view for ancestor worship. The shamanistic world view provided an effective way of relating the life of the dead, and the world of a departed spirit to the world of men” (Ro Y.C 1988:16).

Lee E.B (2000:54) understood “ancestor worship not only as a product of Confucianism, but also as combining with the spirit worship of Shamanism”. In Shamanism, the death of a human being is sorrowful. Specifically, when someone dies prematurely, *Han*, which means resentment, could be formed. In this case, the miserable death is considered as the intervention of an evil god (good and evil gods are clearly distinguished in Shamanism). The *han*, which is formed by the evil god could then be driven away by the help of the good god. The *moodang*, who is the Shaman, performs rituals to drive the evil god or sometimes to appease the angry ancestors’ *han*’ (:54-7). Confucianism is only interested in those who lived well in the world; it seldom considered

people who died with *han*. Lee explains further that as the “people’s religion, Shamanism had to interest these *han*-possessed spirits to release it by *moodang*” (:68). If we compare the views of death and of ancestors between Confucianism and Shamanism, there are not many differences, except only that Shamanism deals with the *han* of the people. It shows us how much the Shamanistic view of death influences the death view of Confucianism.

Gum (2003:7) locates the foundation of ancestor worship in the death view of Confucianism. He notes that there are two explanations about how individuals exist after death. One of them is that after death, the being is sustained as a form of *honbeck* (spirit) for a fixed time; the other is that the dead could exist through their descendants”. The first notion is similar to the Xhosa’s in that the dead are not considered dead immediately, but when they are forgotten by their descendants, they are then considered truly dead. In Korea, a dead ancestor becomes a god in four stages (cf. Park J.M 2002:259-62). For Cha Y.J (2000:259), ancestors do not disappear, but they may only be forgotten by their descendants.

Moreover, the meaning of death is the loss of individuality and the absorption as an original being. Thus, the individuality of a human being disappears with the body after death, at the same time; the individuality could be sustained through the lives of their descendants, who represent the other ‘self’ of their body. “If the individuality of a human being can be sustained through family ties, then, ancestors are the basis of individuals own foundation life” (Gum 1986:737-4). Consequently, to respect ancestors is to esteem themselves. In the Confucian tradition of the *Chosên* dynasty, whether or not ghosts of the dead exist depends on how well descendants serve their ancestors (cf. Gum 2003:9).

3.2.1.4 Shamanism

As we have noted, Shamanism is the most influenced religion by Confucian rituals of ancestor in Korea. Confucianism of the *Chosên* dynasty, which offers a socio-ethical and political structure, was displeased with Shamanism of the lower class with regard to the character or attitude of ancestor worship. Jang (1986:96-7) observes that; “shamanistic belief of ancestor worship is based on fear of ancestor while Confucian belief on ancestor worship stresses mostly blessing and protection for descendants”. At some point, the government of the *Chosên* dynasty prohibited Shamanism (cf. Ryu T.S 1965:29). However, Shamanism continued and influenced a thousand years of Korean’s history because of its harmonising character. Chung (1997:33)

claims that; “Shamanism has a highly fluid worldview, which has always blended easily into other forms of magic and such historical religions as Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism and even Christianity”. For this reason, studying Shamanism is basic to understanding the religious mentality of Koreans, particularly the matter of ancestors. Ordinarily, Shamanism is understood as:

...a traditional and spontaneous religious phenomenon in which the Shaman, who possesses a specific ability to trance-possess (which means to make contact with supernatural world) attempts to help us realise all the desires and necessities required by humans, such as fortune-omen-mishap-blessing etc., by the use of this transcendental power (Kim T.K 1999:18).

Furthermore, shamanism also has a certain form of ancestor worship. Jang J.G (1986:97) reckons that even if ancestor worship of Shamanism has no clear features, it is the oldest form of ancestor worship in Korea. He claims that we can see forms of the ancestor worship especially in the *gasin-jesa*, family ritual, and the *maeul-jesa*, community ritual.

However, in these two ancestral forms of worship, the worship is not of specific ancestors, who have the paternal name of the kinsfolk, but ancestors as a whole or ancestors of a village and community are the objects of worship. While Confucianism takes responsibility for the ethical matter in the *Chosên* dynasty, Shamanism’s interest is more ‘egoistic’ (Ryu 1978:107), like “groping to redeem human being from disasters” (1965:22) and “liberating human beings from the suffering through controlling shamans” (Wi 1998:164). In spite of the differences with Confucianism, ancestor worship of Shamanism based on a wide agricultural culture became melted with that of Confucianism.

3.2.2 Ancestor matters in Korea

In the last quarter of the eighteenth century, when Roman Catholic was first introduced, Korean culture was thoroughly saturated with Confucianism, which focused upon the life principles of patriotic loyalty and filial duty. As a national religion of policy, Confucianism espoused basic ethical principles as well as a pragmatic socio-political policy. To honour filial duty, regarded as the most fundamental and integral ethical principle of Confucianism, was to follow the Mandate of Heaven and thus to reach the union of Heaven and human being (*johwa*), the ideal state of human being. It was also intended to bring unity and harmony into the large family system and

socio-political stability to the nation. Thus, when Catholicism encountered *Chosên*, it became actually confronted with a Confucian system. As it turned out, “the ancestor practice led to the martyrdom of approximately, ten thousand Catholics” (Min 1974:184). When Christian missionaries first stepped in *Chosên* in 1888, the *Chosên* society had already begun to change in many ways. As a result, even though Protestants had some conflict with the *Chosên* people, it was relatively easy to infiltrate into the society. Nevertheless, in this regard, we need to examine Catholic confrontation with Confucianism in *Chosên* and their changing attitudes.

Concerning chronological precedents, Chidester (2000:424, 437) followed colonial and postcolonial analysis of regions, which was econo-politically influenced by colonised empires. This “regional study of colonial situations has provided resources for re-interpreting the ways in which religion has operated in contexts of intercultural contact, encounter and exchange in the Americas (cf. Gilroy 1993; Greenblatt 1991; Hulme 1986; MacCormack 1991; Seed 1991; Taussig 1980, 1987; Todorov 1984), Africa (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991, 1997; Werbner and Ranger 1996), the Middle East (Mitchell 1991), South Asia (Breckenridge and Van der Veer 1993; Deepika and Vasudeva 1996; Guha 1997; Inden 1990; Nandy 1983; Schwarz 1997; Singh 1996), East Asia (Barrow 1997; Wiener 1995), and Pacific Islands (Sahlins 1985; Thomas 1991, 1997)”. In addition, he notes that:

Attention for postcolonial era has shifted away from the critique of European colonial representation of others to a recovery of the subjectivity and agent of the colonised. So two extreme positions in postcolonial studies and indigeneity, which generates analytical terms of recovering the purity of local traditions from the defiling effects of global imperialism, and hybridity, which is directed toward the cultural space in between, the intercultural space of contact, relations and exchange (Chidester 2000:432-4).

Chidester’s chronological distinction of regions is effective except in the context of *Chosên* and Korea. As we shall learn, the accident of *Jinsan*³⁵, a national isolation policy up to the first decade of twentieth century protected *Chosên* from religious disturbance of imperialists. Non-radical acceptance of Protestantism from 1887 gave timely chance to Korean churches to encounter with the margin, re-interpret and exchange the Western Christianity. In difference to Chidester’s distinction, Korean churches responded to Western Christianity from diverse

³⁵ Yun Ji-chung who was a Confucian scholar denied rituals when his mother passed away, and burnt *Sinju*, which Koreans believe the dead live in. He was then executed under the suspicion of disloyalty and undutifulness to his ancestors. This accident detonated the *Sinyou* persecution, which was the first national persecution of the Catholics (Han. O.G 1981: 345).

missiologial positions. In this regard, this chapter researches the diverse missiologial responses of Korean churches and theologians to ancestor matter.

3.2.2.1 Confucianism and ancestor matter

3.2.2.1.1 Historical understanding of Catholic attitude to ancestor matter

When the Western world and Catholicism was introduced by some books via China in the 18th century, Confucian scholars of the *Chosên* dynasty were divided into two leading groups. One was the *Northern School*, which showed interest only in the modern science of the West and not sustained for too long; the other school, *Sungho*; made up of scholars such as, Jung Yack-yong was interested in Catholicism. Gum (2003:16) claims that some of the leading figures who were deeply involved in Confucianism, initiated the Catholic movement in the 1780's. Unfortunately, the Catholic movement were at once met with confrontation by Confucianism over ancestor matter at *Jinsan* in 1791.

Kim O (1987:82) recalls that; “through this accident, the leaders of the Catholic Church were divided in two; one on them became the main body of the Church through the *Sinyou* persecution in 1801, others fell at the stumbling block of ancestor matters and kept distance with Catholicism”. The confrontation of dogma between the West and the East surrounding ancestor matters in China from the middle of 17th to the early 18th century re-emerged in *Chosên* at the end of 18th century. Scholars of the *Kiho* School tried to compromise this confrontation but there was no resolution on both sides. The main reason for the confrontation was ancestor matters.

If we make allowance for the fact that Confucianism was a national principle used in governance, and it had a role to unify the society, the *Chosên* government could not deal with the transmission of Catholicism from a religious dimension. Against the well-organised order of family, community and nation, which was based on the idea of filial duty, Catholicism not only violated the religious dimension of ancestor worship, but was also considered as social heathenism. For the reason that Confucianism in *Chosên* was a religious institution, the response toward alien religions such as Catholicism, was also religious. The clearly distinguished religious feature in Confucianism was ancestor worship. Hence, Catholics, initially had to conflict with ancestral issues such as, the *Jinsan* accident. Shin (1998:186) notes that the distinction between sacred and secular originally appeared in religions, but if religion is social in

character, then social things could also be counted as religious. Again, if we reckon with Durkheim's observation, filial duty, *Sinju* and ancestor worship in *Chosên* were sacred, thus, in Weber's word, Catholicism was heterodoxy.

In 1936 and 1939, the Vatican recanted the prohibition of ancestral rituals, which had been operated since 1742, and permitted it as customs of locals. This resulted in the martyrdom of over 100,000 faithfuls whose lives were laid down to end the disputation of one and a half century. The official opinion of the Catholic Church about ancestor worship is that "authorisation of ancestral ritual means that it is permitted as only customs and decorum, but not as religious conduct... because, we have only Mass, which is authentic worship" (Catholic Institute of Ministration 1996:212-4). In a 1987 survey, the following question was posed: "What is your opinion about the practice of ancestral ritual?" The response from 87.9% of Korean Catholics was that it is acceptable because it is filial duty.³⁶ In the same vein, Gang (2000:200) states that "in 1998, 91.2% of Catholics of Korea responded that they practised ancestral ritual in some ways. Yun evaluated that this cognition about ancestor worship is identical to the official policy of Catholic Church".³⁷

3.2.2.1.2 View of the Western protestant missionaries on ancestor worship

Most missionaries from the West who entered Korea before 1920 confessed a traditional and conservative faith. There are few missionaries, who hold a modern view in the interpretation of the Bible, and in theology; these had to walk a thorny path in the midst of conservative fellow missionaries. After the analysis of the confession of each denomination of the early Korean Church, Ryu D.Y (2001:93) insists that these confessions are similar to those of American fundamentalism of the 1920's. Moreover, the reason mission groups from six different denominations, easily agreed to form a united mission council, *The General Council of Evangelical Mission in Korea* is for the commonalities of traditional and conservative faith (:98-9).

The influence of Western missionaries in Korea was absolute. As a missionary in the Korean Mission Field declares, "our norm will become their (Korean church) norm. Our deed will

³⁶ See, the result of 1987 in No, Kil-myung & Ou, Kyung-hwan, *Religious Thought and Life of Catholics* (카톨릭 신자의 종교의식과 신앙생활), (Catholic Newspaper Publishing, 1988).

³⁷ See, Yun, Sun-ja, *Allowance Order of Ancestral Ritual in 1939 and Chosên Catholic Church (1939년 조상제사 허용훈령과 조선 천주교회)*, *Religion and Culture*, vol.1. (Religious Cultural Lab of Hansin University, 1999).

become their deed. We are their Bible.”³⁸ Ryu D.Y (2001:93) adds that; “theology of Korea at that time means the theology of the Western missionaries”. In another instance, the *Dong-a* newspaper on 15th of June 1925, criticised Christians thus; “Christians are so illiterate that they only listen to missionaries” (cf. Cha O.S 1993:532). For Paik (1929:220-1), “missionaries’ thought, their responses and their guide for Korean Church reflected the opinion of the early Korean Church”.³⁹

Protestant missions in Korea have diverse opinions concerning ancestral matters. In broad terms, for some of them ancestor worship is not to influence the dead ancestors, but is an extension of filial duty;⁴⁰ for others, this matter is to be considered religious.⁴¹ Most of missionaries commonly regard ancestor matter as religious worship (cf. Gifford 1934:136; Baird 1934; Gale 1986; Clark 1961; Underwood 2000; Herbert 1984; Fenwick: Choi K.B). Initially, Gale’s evaluation was that *Chosên* has no specific religions because there are no temples, monks, praying places, ascetics, sacred animals, places to sell sacred books and candlesticks, and pictures. He only recognises “ancestor worship as religious feature” (Gale 1986:49-51). He understands “ancestor worship as strange syncretistic religion with Buddhism, Taoism, spirit worship, *feng-shui*, astrology, and animism” (:50). He notes that “*Chosên* people have many religious rituals but they consider ancestor worship above others; believing that ancestor worship was a means of prosperity and success. To neglect ancestor worship was to stray from the right path” (:51). He also observes that; “ancestor worship totally controls the mind and spirit of *Chosên* people” (:54). His response to ancestor worship is to ignore it. His analogy is that if a beggar becomes the prince of a kingdom, he will obviously fling his old clothes away, and in this manner, “*Chosên* people should abandon ancestor worship after religious consciousness” (:56). However, he recommends that “other missionaries should show courtesy toward the customs of *Chosên*” (:59).

Hulbert defines the religions of *Chosên* as spirit worship based on animism, Shamanism, Deism, and all the other cultures of *Chosên* are nothing other than that the upper structure is based on these syncretistic religions (Hulbert 1984:389). He understands ancestor worship as a product of the syncretistic religions of *Chosên*, which are founded on the spirit worship of Confucianism. He sees a Confucian influence on ancestor worship, which believes that the dead care for their

³⁸ *Korea Mission Field*, 4/3. March 1908, 41.

³⁹ Paik shows that the opinions of some senior missionaries in Seoul on ancestral matters have set a precedent.

⁴⁰ See “Obstacles Encountered by Korean Christians,” *The Korean Repository* 2. (April, 1985), 146.

⁴¹ See “Confucianism in Korea,” *The Korean Repository* 2. (November, 1985), 402.

descendants and influence their daily lives (:428-9). In addition, there is the “shamanistic influence” of performing ‘*gut*’,⁴² which has three kinds of ritual forms that are all three related to the spirit of the dead (:399-400). Hulbert presumes that *Chosên* people are immersed in myths and legends, and he compares the *Chosên* society with the Middle Ages of the West (:420). The assumption that the situation in *Chosên* could be attributed to a low educational level is a view based on cultural imperialism or cultural evolutionary theory.

Although Underwood understands “Confucianism in *Chosên* as an ethical system based on filial duty, recognising ancestor worship has only remained a religious fact in Confucianism” (Underwood 2000:92). Based on his conversations with Confucian scholars, he recognises ancestor worship in Confucianism as religious because of two things – the spirit and *Sinju*. However, he does not consider Confucianism itself as religious.⁴³

In particular, Underwood notes that “the features of ancestor worship are similar to those of the Christian high priest in terms of the position of the eldest son of the family head of Confucianism” (:95). His view differs from that of Gale and of Hulbert in that, he emphasises a change in consciousness because even the educated are also deeply immersed in ancestor worship. His solution is that one ought “to show filial duty for the living parents more than followers of Confucianism who boast in their filial duty” to dead parents (:95). In other words, he believes that through the exemplary conduct of Christians, the problem of ancestor worship could be solved. He evaluates filial duty positively as a contact point in mission.

In a similar way, Griffis (1964:415, 420) remarks that *Chosên* people are thoroughly devoted to ancestor worship based on Confucianism claiming that the ideas of filial duty and ancestor worship are prevalent. He also understands that ancestor worship is related to Confucianism but also has roots in superstitions and is related to Buddhism (:412). He regards this as a problem that needs to be overcome, but also regrets that sometimes even Christians are prone to this problem (:410). He considers ancestor worship as a mental disease but hopes that when the need of Koreans is fulfilled and they are cured of mental, social and political diseases, inevitably one day, this ghost worship will be destroyed (:488). His solution for ancestor problems may not to be overcome from a religious dimension, but through holistic transformation of Korean society.

⁴² ‘*Gut*’ is a shamanistic performance of invocation of evil spirits to protect people.

⁴³ In Confucianism, the belief is that if a human being dies, his spirit is divided into three, one remains in the body, the other goes to the other world, while the last one dwells in *Sinju*, a totem made with two small pieces of wood.

From another perspective, Lee M.Y (2001:91) recalls that in 1934 Clark identified thirteen reasons for success in the Korean Mission Field; one of these was the conservative faith of missionaries. He notes that most missionaries who arrived in Korea before 1920 had a conservative or colonial view of theology, specifically with regard to culture. On the other hand, some missionaries who came after this period recognised some positive side of Confucianism. While some of them considered it as religious, other missionaries understood it as just cultural and not religious. For instance, Dale & von Buskirt (1931:31) evaluate its fault as spirit worship but they positively assessed its teaching and function of social stability, unity, and filial duty. Furthermore, Voelkel considers it a 'social tradition' (cf. Shearer 1968:96) while Rutt understands praying to ancestor, not as religious as mere rhetoric (:96). For Shearer, ancestral ritual is not a worship of spirits, but an extension of filial duty and if Christian missionaries in Korea would respect Korean cultures and allow them to be maintained, then many people who feel that respect for their ancestors is being obstructed, would become Christians (:98).

3.2.2.1.3 Understanding of Korean Church on ancestor matters

Chosên society accepted ancestor worship as a social criterion and therefore, did not admit Christianity for its attitude toward ancestor worship. However, a social desire to get rid of *Chosên*'s old-fashioned system accompanied by a challenge of traditional value system after the loss of social stability of feudalistic era, appeared as an acceptance of Christianity. Although, *Chosên* had already experienced confrontation with Catholic on ancestral issues, ancestor worship was still a huge obstacle for mission in *Chosên*.

The earliest document on ancestor worship found in the Korean Church is the one of 1904 from the Presbyterian Christian Church of *Chosên* (조선 예수교 장로회) established in 1893. The assembly decided that the *Chosên* Church, following the Chinese Church's decision, should only perform funeral solemnly and replace ancestor worship with a memorial service (cf. Shu 1988:203). In the era between the end of *Chosên* and early Korea, the attitude of the church toward ancestral matters was that to serve God authentically, is real ritual,⁴⁴ and to serve one's living parents is authentic filial duty, as opposed to performing ancestral ritual for the dead with

⁴⁴ The Origin of all Things (만물의 근원). *Chosên Christian's Bulletin* (조선 크리스도인의 회보). vol. 1, no. 7. (17 Mar, 1897).

lots of food.⁴⁵

Beck (1973:230) concludes that “this was a natural consequence because most of the Western missionaries prohibited ancestor worship, and did not consider ancestral rituals essential to becoming a church member”. The stance on ancestral rituals got tougher in the Korean Church around 1915. According to Park H.S (1988:45) about the evening of the anniversary of a death, “it is not reasonable to prepare food and invite guests, because it is a sad day. Therefore each assembly elder may make recommendations, but if a member is found guilty of violating the church’s recommendation, then he is disciplined”.

In 1920, *Dong-a*, daily newspaper, printed the article *An Ambiguous and Innocent Victim of Christianity* (애매무죄한 기독교의 희생자). It states that “to prohibit ancestor worship is not to know the teachings of Christ, to follow the Western missionaries unconditionally is to ignore the traditions of *Chosên*, and to serve ancestors is not to transgress religious beliefs” (cf. Ryu 1988:100-8). Lee Sang-jae, who was a director of Y.M.C.A⁴⁶ in Korea, wrote an article⁴⁷ in which he surmises that, “a filial duty is a basic virtue of human beings, and ancestor worship is an expression of it. Thus, there is no reason for Christianity, which insists on filial duty, to oppose ancestor worship. It is only when ancestor worship becomes superstitiously connected with fortune and misfortune that it cannot be accepted; otherwise it might be accepted as an expression of filial duty” (1988:102). As a counter-argument, Yang Ju-sam states⁴⁸ that “filial duty is a principle of human beings, but ritual is merely a custom. Therefore, when ancestral ritual as a custom is not fit for modern life style, and has a corrupt custom, it has to cease” (:103). On this disputation, *Dong-a* daily newspaper published three separate reviews;⁴⁹ their arguments were similar that of Lee.

There were other voices. In 1920’s, a leading figure in the Korean Church was Choi. Byung-hun was also esteemed as the first indigenous theologian, and both leaders dealt with ancestral matters in Korean context. In 1926, Pyon Young Tai circulated his article, *My View on Ancestral Matters*. His opinion was that ancestor worship is not idol worship. Bowing down in Asia does not signify worship but respect, and if the teaching of the Bible concerning bowing down has not

⁴⁵ A Filial Duty of the President of America (미국 대통령의 효행). *Chosên Christian Bulletin* (조선 크리스도인의 회보). Vol. 2, no. 32. (10 Aug, 1898).

⁴⁶ The Young Men Christian Association.

⁴⁷ See, *Dong-a daily newspaper*. (1 Nov, 1920).

⁴⁸ See, *Dong-a daily newspaper*. (4 Nov, 1920).

⁴⁹ See, *Dong-a daily newspaper*. (10, 24 and 25 Nov, 1920).

been interpreted literally, then memorial rituals should be considered expressions of filial duty and ethical conduct. It is therefore, proper to use the term ‘memorial rituals’ rather than ‘worship’ (1926:7). Shu (1988:207) recalls Che Pil-gun’s view on ancestor worship that ancestral rituals of Asia are idol worship. Similarly, Shu (:207) opines that filial duty in Christianity is only for the living parents. Moreover, the negative stance toward ancestor worship, including preparing food and praying for them, became the official position of the Korean Presbyterian Church. In 1930’s and 1940’s in Korea, ancestor worship became completely related with Shintoism. When Korean Christianity was confronted with the pressure to engage in Shinto worship exerted by Japan (1910 - 1945), it actually encountered a bigger problem than Confucianism. Unlike most missionaries who forbade attendance in Shinto shrines, there was a division of opinion among the various Christian churches on the matter of Shinto shrine attendance, which occurred to some extent along denominational lines. In 1935, a Japanese official summoned and admonished church leaders in the following words:

The Shrine is a place where the spirit of our national father and veteran statesmen are dedicated; it is a public institution toward which we express our respect and reverence... From an educational viewpoint, it is necessary to worship such consecrated spirit, for it is an essence of national morality... Therefore, shrine worship is nothing more than a practical discipline of respect and reverence for ancestors (Kim.Y.S. 1956:171-6).

Initially, most denominations prohibited attendance in shrines. Under severe persecution, major denominations such as the Presbyterian and Methodist eventually yielded to Japanese pressure regarding observance at Shinto shrines while some Christians from those denominations separated themselves from them, rejecting Shinto worship.

After the difficult era of the Korean War of 1950’s, indigenous Korean theologies emerged in full-scale, and under this new circumstance, ancestral matters became re-evaluated. The *Minjung* theology of Hyun Young-hack, the *Pungryu* theology of Ryu Tong-sick, the theology of other religions of Byun Sun-hwan, and the theology of *Sung* were the most popular and leading indigenous theologies in Korea with regard to ancestral issues. The attitude of most of these theologies toward ancestor worship in Christianity is positive. In 1979, Cho Yong-ki (David), who ministers in the world’s largest church,⁵⁰ addressed his church on ancestor matters stating that; “the dead parents are also parents. Thus, ancestor ritual is not idol worship because it is to respect one’s parents. If descendants do not use an ancestral paper tablet (*jibang*) or erect a cross,

⁵⁰ Minister of the Full Gospel Church of *Yûido*.

their bowing down should not be regarded as idol worship” (Wi 1998:177). This sermon led to ‘the heresy disputation of Cho’, and the 68th Presbyterian assembly (1983, 9 *Tonghap*) confirmed him as a heretic. On the 4th of December 1981, a Korean daily newspaper published an article titled, ‘*Ancestor Ritual Disputation among Christians* (기독교계의 제사논쟁)’. The article points out the serious nature of the disputation over ancestor practice and mentions positive opinions of some theologians, such as, Jang-sick, Jun Teck-bu, and You Gyung-je.⁵¹ In another article, ‘*Ancestor Rituals of Korea are not Idol Worship* (한국의 제례는 우상숭배가 아니다)’, the *Joonggang* daily newspaper in 1982 remarks that even if Protestantism in Korea became a hundred years old, it would still not escape from the arguments and cultural discord confronting ancestral ritual.⁵² Again, the Asian Theological Association and the Taiwan Church Renewal Center co-sponsored ‘The consultation on the Christian response to ancestor practices’ in Taipei in 1983. Son Bong-ho, Ro Bong-rin, Lee Jong-yun and Kim Myung-hyuk who attended this meeting showed a “negative attitude, considering it as idol worship” (Ro B.R 1985).

Despite denominational differences, the stance of the Korean Church on ancestor worship has been negative, being influenced by the traditions of Western missionaries. Besides the memorial service (*chudosick*) for the dead,⁵³ an indigenous aspect of ancestral worship prevalent in the Korean Church, there have been discussions and calls for indigenous ancestral rituals from certain quarters of the church. A 1987 survey of the practice of ancestral ritual in a Presbyterian Church (*Tonghap*) showed that 99% of ministers had consultations about ancestor matters from their members, and 61% of them recommended the practice based on the conditions of the members. Additionally, whereas 67% of them are thinking of reconsidering the current attitude of Christianity on ancestor matter, 67% of Christians consider it not as idol worship, but as cultural ritual’ (Ryu S.H 1987:123-55). This shows evidence of polarity in the Korean Church over ancestor practice.

3.3 Indigenous approach in Korean local theologies - Theological approach

In this section, we shall examine the Catholic model of indigenous approach. Understanding Catholic ideas as the premise for Protestantism is crucial in the Korean context. A critical

⁵¹ See, *Korean Daily Newspaper*. (4 Dec, 1981).

⁵² See, *Joonggang Daily Newspaper*. (2 July, 1982).

⁵³ Ryu, Soon-ha found the first example of the ‘memorial service (추도식)’ was for a missionary, Dr. Hall and was performed by W.A Noble in the *Baeje School* on 27th November 1984. Ryu Soon-ha, *Christian Service and Confucian Ritual* (기독교 예배와 유교 제사). (Seoul: Sungsil University Publications, 1987), 159.

evaluation of the ideas of some leading Korean Protestant theologians will be carried out with a view to understand Korea's local theology.

3.3.1 Catholic model of holistic approach

3.3.1.1 Chong Yag-yong as a practical scholar

Chong Yag-yong (1762-1831) can be described as the first Confucian scholar to find a way of re-evaluating Confucianism through the mutual illustration of Catholicism with Confucianism. He used worldviews and religious ideas to interpret Confucianism. His first encounter with Catholic was at the age of twenty-six, and he practised it for between four and five years. However, he apostatised after the *Jinsan* accident, which resulted in the prohibition of Catholicism through a national law. For him, the issue of ancestor worship was a crucial one. He confessed that he never saw the Catholic doctrine when he studied Western literatures.⁵⁴ He therefore, stressed the importance of ancestral rituals, which he practised even while he was in exile. He also wrote articles to reform the practice in modernised way. According to Choi S.W (1997:43), "Dallet recorded that even if it was true that he apostatised, he still remained in the Catholic faith in his mind". This implies that he did not follow the direction of Catholic missionaries who insisted on the discontinuation of ancestral rituals rather, he understood it as extended expression of filial duty, which has to develop (cf. Choi K.B 1989:308-19).

Insistence on the abolition of ancestral rituals by the Catholic Church caused a secession of the *yangban* (nobility) group, and their entrance into the 'Church of the common people'. We should note that the common people were comparably free to practice ancestral ritual in *Chosŏn* society. Invariably, the character of Catholicism was becoming anti-feudalistic and anti-Confucianism and its uncompromising stance concerning ancestor matters was becoming stronger. Of course, these tendencies became an obstacle for indigenisation. Lim (1995:400-1) shows that their belief developed in two extreme ways. The one is to pursue personal salvation and ignores the world while the other follows a more radical way aimed at changing the society.

As a result, Catholics who abolished ancestral rituals were branded immoral people who did not acknowledge the king or their parents, by the members of Confucian society in *Chosŏn*.

⁵⁴ *Ryeyoudang-jŏnsŏ*(여유당전서). I-9 44a, (Seoul: Gyungin Munhwa-sa, 1969), 192.

Contrarily, Catholics who lapsed in faith because of ancestor practice were branded apostates over filial duty and natural law. However, some people such as, Chong Yag-yong chose a third way, they tried to communicate with Catholics with pride in the traditional culture of *Chosŏn* and with intellectual subjectivity.

3.3.1.2 Chong Yag-yong's view of the Great Ultimate and filial duty

Chong Yag-yong's view of the Great Ultimate is reflected in '*Young Myong-Ju Jai chun (Sangje)*', which means the sublime, spiritual ruler of all things or the whole universe including human beings. His conception of *chun* is a personal supreme being. '*Young Myong-Ju Jai Chun (Sangje)*' is the core of his philosophy and the fused worldviews of both Catholicism and classical Confucianism (cf. Lee S.H 2001:iii). The worldview of Confucianism is monistic metaphysics. All beings are one including human beings; nature and human beings are also not divided. In a relational way, even the ultimate being, *chun* (heaven) is not lopsided transcendence. All of nature, human beings and *chun* are considered relational beings. It should be noted that the weakness of the monistic view of God, specifically Confucianism, is that there is insufficient explanation of the ultimate being itself, an advantage which the Western view of God, specifically Christianity, has.

The God of Christianity reveals himself through a personal revelation and through prophets. On the other hand, *chun* is recognised in Confucianism as revealing itself through *sung*, (intrinsic attribute)⁵⁵ and nature. *Young Myong-Ju Jai chun (Sangje)* not only grants *sung*, but also participates in its growth. This method is not direct but through mediation of ghosts or gods. There is harmony between human beings and nature in this regard; and if the *sung* of human being is complete, the *sung* of nature also becomes complete.

Further, the assumption is that even if there is a distinction between the heavenly god and the earthly god, all nature is one fundamentally. The gods of the sun and the moon, wind and rain,

⁵⁵ See Kim K.I. (1998). The idea that *sung* of human beings is revealed through themselves has similarity with Whitehead's process philosophy, which sees nature as process, formation and organic relation. Confucianism stresses a mutation and formation, integral and organic character. It understands nature as combination of Yin and Yang in the endless mutation and formation, and has a structure which is symbolized as good and evil. The basic purpose of human beings, who live within these organic structures, is to reach *sung* which they believe is the stage of unity of *sangje*. As a human being practises *sung* to the utmost degree, he becomes a saint (*sungin*). The contents of *youngmyung*, which is a tool to attain unto *sung*, are reason and morality. And human being and nature are in the accompanying relation to acquire *sung*, because the target of *sung* is always other humans and nature.

and the gods or the deities of the State and the forest are all gods of *chun* but they divide to take charge of the earth and heaven. Hence, they are called heavenly god and earthly god, and they all protect all of nature by the command of *sangje*. Ritual performance, therefore, is the reward of heaven's king.⁵⁶

The role of gods is to rule human affairs and nature by the command of *Sangje*. For Lee S.H (2001:29), "the entire world exists by the merit of gods and all the wonders of nature are traces of gods". Even if with the granted *youngmyung* they protect the world, their origin comes from *chun*. Therefore, when human beings offer rituals to various gods, they also worship *Sangje*. Chong Yag-yong distinguishes *chun* from various gods, while he argues that all worship rituals to gods are actually to *chun*. He affirms that *Sangje* is not only a foundation of formless spirits including the human soul, but also of gods, and of the only ruler of both material and formless worlds. Thus, ancestral worship for him is nothing else but worship to *Sangje*.

In this sense, Chong Yag-yong stresses a service to *Sangje* comparable with filial duty to parents:

Filial duty is nothing bigger than to love the intimates. People who practice filial duty to parents might love their parents' brethren; those who show filial duty to grand parents could love their grand parents' brethren. So to serve the founder with pleasure is the filial duty of the gentry, to serve great lords is the filial duty of feudal lords, to serve great kings of a nation and *Sangje* is the filial duty of kings.⁵⁷

The biggest filial duty is the one that kings offer to *Sangje*. But this duty to serve *Sangje* is not just the duty of kings, it is the filial duty of all people to serve *Sangje*, and the filial duty to *Sangje* is paramount. Chong Yag-yong understood *Sangje* worship in terms of filial duty. For him, filial duty and ancestor worship are to be handled carefully and importantly in the process of acquiring *sung*. To practice human duty, that is, filial duty, is to serve *chun*.

Shin (1998:189) claims that filial duty has value in the aspect of contents, and rituals and *sinju* are useful in the formal aspect. Therefore, ancestor rituals and *sinju* are forms, which closely combine with the value of filial duty. For Chong Yag-yong then, contents and forms of ancestral rituals are not uncomfortable in his monistic and organic view of God. On the contrary, since

⁵⁶ *Ryeyoudang-jênsé*(여유당전서), II – 4. 32b.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, II-4,32a-32b.

Catholics confess Christianity's God as the only God and deny ancestor worship, he decided to serve *chun* through intimate relationship between the dead and the living descendants in his organic and integral ideology.

Thus, Chong dealt with ancestor worship from a monistic Confucian view of God in. That means all beings including humans relate with the ultimate. Even if he grasped the character of God after recognition of the Western idea of the importance of human rationality, human beings, nature, and God are organic and share a compensational relationship. Chong's ideology of ancestor worship considered through his view of God is integral to an understanding of the oriental monistic view. The reason for regarding Catholicism as heresy is that the refusal of ancestor worship meant a dismantling of *Chosên's* Confucian society, and secession from the order that was founded upon filial duty. However, in the case of Chong, ancestor worship is recognised in relation with the Confucian view of salvation, that is, the utmost goal of *sung* is salvation and the view of God.

3.3.2 Recent indigenous understanding of Korean theologies

As we noted, it was in the 1960's that an indigenisation discussion of theology in Korean was initiated on a full-scale. For a study about a dialogue between Christianity and traditional Korean religious tradition, Shamanism and Confucianism, in this section we shall consider the *Pung-Ryu* theology of Ryu Tong-shik and the theology of *Sung* of Yun Sung-bum among models, which have a positive view of traditional Korean religions.

3.3.2.1 *Pung-Ryu* Theology of Ryu Tong-shik as dialogue with Shamanism

3.3.2.1.1 Background of the indigenisation idea of Ryu Tong-shik

The concern of Ryu in the 1960's was to investigate the relationship between Korean religious culture and Christianity. His view of indigenisation was expressed in his book (1962), *Indigenisation of Gospel and Missional Assignment in Korea* (복음의 토착화와 한국에서의 선교적 과제), and it is about how seeds of gospel are sowed in the minds (field) of Koreans. He develops this view in three questions:

First of all, what is the content of traditional religious cultures of Korea before Christianity

was introduced? Secondly, are all these religious cultures useless and meaningless history and are outside the story of God? Thirdly, what is the position of traditional religious culture of Korea in relation to Christianity? These religious traditions also aim to seek God and salvation in their own ways. Are these efforts irrelevant with the Christian God? (Ryu 1988:143)

Ryu's questions are concerned with the distinction between salvation and culture, between the traditional culture of Korea and Christianity and his aim was to concentrate on a research of religious traditions of Korea in which Christianity has its roots. His theological research was about how traditional religious culture of Korea becomes a tool for the revelation of God, and how it influences the religious thought of the Korean. He concludes that the role of traditional religions was like satellites, which reflect the light of gospel in the era before Christianity was introduced.⁵⁸ The basis of this role is a universal Christ and universality of the gospel (:143). If traditional religions, which formed the religious cultures of Koreans, believed in redemption in the non-Christian era, it may be possible to identify a contact point because it means that regarding the universality of the gospel, Koreans accepted and lived the truth of the gospel through religious terms, forms, and understanding.

Christ was already working for salvation, which is the restoration of humanity, through the religious tradition of Korea. Hence, the church has to find Christ who was already working in it, and cooperate with him to manifest him. The church is a lens for revealing Christ who exists and works in it (:143).

The significance of the gospel and salvation in this view is that the Word of God became a human being.

For Ryu, the gospel is an event about the formation of new human beings as a medium of self-denial of the universal Christ-logos. Here is a contact point of the gospel with other religions. As a medium of self-denial, other religions encounter Christ through religious experiences. Ryu's view is similar to the notion of 'anonymous Christian' as he claims that every religion reflects a fraction of the gospel and all the fractions are meaningful (:144-5). On the basis of this incarnational view of other religions, he also stresses the idea of 'subjective eyes' (Ryu

⁵⁸ Ryu explained the relation between Christianity and other religions as the sun and satellites giving Panikkar as an example. To be redeemed is not through own religions but by the gospel of Christ. However, they actually do not know the name of Christ, they could live in the grace of the gospel not by the form of Christianity, but own religious form.

1983:321) or *ûel* (:322), which means spirit.

If the gospel written in the Bible is the word through the eyes of Jewish culture, Western theologies also understand the gospel through the eyes of Greco-Roman culture. Even if God's word is transcendent, it had to be incarnated specifically in terms of salvation work. 'Subjective eyes' are formed through specific culture and history and our assignment is to develop our theology according to people's peculiar culture (:321)

In other words, developing a religious culture in Korea was a subjective process or transaction that was produced from external influence. The way of thinking and the structure of consciousness determine the mode of subjective transaction and Shamanism plays a central role in the formation of this structure of consciousness of Koreans (1978:103). Ryu assumes that the soil of Korean culture is composed of three layers of Buddhism, Confucianism, and the Western culture of Christianity. However, there is a core in the Korean religious culture, which produces its own skin or layers through the acceptance of alien religious cultures; it is Shamanism (1988:148). Ryu's investigation resulted in a positive evaluation of *doh* (*Logos*) of Korea. In the 1980's, his theology began to emerge as what is referred to as the *Pung-Ryu* theology, which was a creative dialogue between the *doh*⁵⁹ of Korean Shamanism and the *Logos* of Christianity. Specifically, he found the origin of *Pung-Ryu* theology in the ideology of Choi Chi-won, who integrated Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. We shall consider the *Pung-Ryu* theology and the place of filial duty and related rituals in his theology.

3.3.2.1.2 Shamanistic culture and Christianity

The foundation of Korean culture in the *Tongilsila* (AD 668 - 935) and *Korye* (AD 918 - 1392) dynasties was Buddhism but this was replaced by Confucianism in the period of the *Chosên* dynasty (AD 1392 - 1910). However, Ryu argues that there has been a consistent flow in Korean culture, and this serves as the basis for its traditional religion. He explains that Korea's Buddhism differs from India's or China's, and even the Confucianism of China had become indigenised in *Chosên*. Consequently, Korean Christianity should not be considered as an extension of the Western culture but as a part of the extended cultural history of Korean culture (Ryu 1970:111-2). What this implies is that, though the upper structure of the religious culture has undergone change, the lower structure, which is Shamanism, is entrenched in the minds of Koreans and has merged with other religious traditions with great flexibility. According to him,

⁵⁹ *Doh* is a way to acquire the truth.

Shamanism and Christianity both have a background of stock-farming culture. Certain worldviews and ideologies are common to them, such as, considering the world as a three-layer structure, the belief in a heavenly God as the sovereign God, and the incarnation of God. Again, the structure of the *Dangun* myth of creation in Shamanism is similar to the creation story of Christianity. Therefore, when Christianity was introduced to Koreans, they could easily accept and understand it because of the similarities that they presume (1980:28). Ryu asserts that:

The structure of Shamanism is to create a new world and a new humanity through the medium of self-denial. People enter the mythical world through the medium of self and history, which is a denial of the secular. Human beings dream of a new world in which they can have communion with gods. To resort to the world of myths, self-denial of real beings is requested (1988:149).

For instance, he regards myths as a reflection of the worldview of a people, an expression of deep ideology. Moreover, the most representative myth of Korea, the *Dangun* myth, is created by the worldview of ancient Shamanism. Through this myth, we can see the structure of Shamanism and its mode of thought based on the ideology of Koreans. Ryu recognises three modes under the concept of myth.

First of all, the heavenly god was incarnated on the *Taebeck* mountain - God as *otherness* came from outside. Secondly, a bear, which was inspired, asked to be converted to a human being. After a while, this bear became sublimated into a woman. This is sublimation into to a different being through the medium of self-denial. Thirdly, through union of the earthly woman and the incarnated god, *Dangun* was born, and he began to create a culture. The conclusion is that a new world was created through the union between a god and human. Here, Shamanism's structural method affirms that a new work of creation occurs through the union with the other. And without the medium of self-denial of being, this will not happen (1978:103).

3.3.2.1.3 *Pung-Ryu* Theology

Ryu unfolds his theology through Shamanism, that is, through the act of communication with the deity through songs and dance and to receive answers to their requests through union with the deity, and with *Pung-Ryudo* of Choi Chi-won. Choi claims that the religious foundation of Korea's *Pung-Ryudo* can be traced to Shamanism (Ryu 1992:19-20). Choi of the *Sila* kingdom of the 6th century asserted that; "there is a deep and profound truth in our country, this is called

Pung-Ryudo... and it contains Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. ⁶⁰

According to him, the essence of Confucianism is to return to one's true character, *ye*, which is decorum, and the essence of Buddhism is also to enable one to return to the merciful heart of Buddha, which is the natural mind of human being. Taoism's stress is on how to live, following a great law of nature instead of living a false life in speech, behaviour, mind, and thought. The communal essence of these three religions is to deny one's egoistic attachment and return to a genuine mind. The universal genuineness of mind is equated with the mind of God. Thus, when a human being unites with God, he enters into a new way of being. It means a shift from an egocentric world to a relational world with others. This is the true nature of God in human beings. In essence, *Pung-Ryudo* is to live following loyalty and the filial duty of Confucianism, the good deed of Buddhism, and an ethical life without selfishness. In summary, the essence of *Pung-Ryudo* is to love others in union with God (1983:324).

In Ryu's theology, Jesus is a real *Pung-Ryugeck*, that is, a person of *Pung-Ryu*, in that he was one with God, and he made himself a sample of love through his character and life (:324-5). Through him, God is with and rules over us. This is the kingdom of heaven and the salvation of human beings. Jesus died for human beings through the medium of self-denial and became a new being to make the idea of *Pung-Ryudo* real in the world. Now when we accept his story as ours, and participate in his Cross and Resurrection, we become the children of God. For Ryu, *Pung-Ryudo* theology and the event of Christ agree in structure and this is a way to restore our *ûel* (spirit) and to accept Jesus Christ (:325).

Subsequently, the structure of *Pung-Ryudo* can be expressed in everyday terms such as, *han*, *mêt*, and *sam* and can be constructed on three norms, (X, Y, Z) of Confucianism, Shamanism, and Christianity. The transcendence of *han* (Y; Shamanistic tradition), actual life of *sam* (Z; Confucian tradition), and the way of *mêt* (X; Christianity tradition), all come from *taegûck*, which is a creative tension relationship. This relationship is a three-in-one relationship; a single ideology is re-constructed from three traditions. *Han* manifests inclusiveness of *Pung-Ryudo*, which means that it is a part and at the same time, the whole. God is its characterised norm. Thus, the theological significance of *han* lies in its inclusiveness (:21-2). God is transcendental and immanent at the same time and the *Pung-Ryu* theology reminds one of God's inclusiveness.

⁶⁰ *Samguksagi*(삼국사기). *Silabonki*(신라본기). Vol.4. *Jinhung kingdom*(진흥왕조). Ryu, Tong-Shik, (1992), 155.

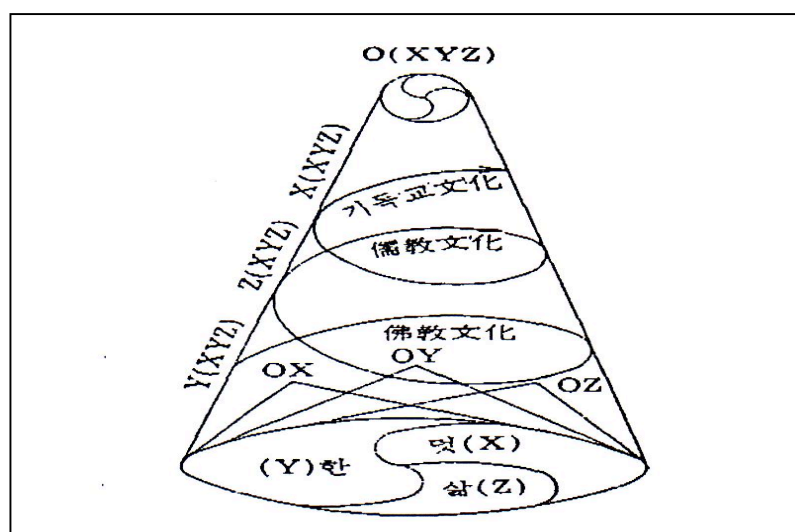


fig. 2 The Structure of *Pung-Ryudo* (in Ryu 1976:67).

In *Pung Ryudo*, *Mêt* has transcendental freedom and harmony. The life itself harmonised between God and human being is the *mêt*, because the transcendental God incarnated and became united with humans. This *mêt* is sublimated as transcendental life through the Holy Spirit; the human united with God through the Holy Spirit and he lives with a love of self-denial. Thus, the Cross is a contact point with the orient religions (:21-31). Ryu explains further that; “If the *han* is a form of *Pung-Ryudo*, the *sam* is to make human beings truly human. As the Word of the gospel, which became a human being is the truth of salvation, the true character of *sam* is the theology of humanisation which recovers the true character of human beings” (:161). Life in *Pung-Ryudo* is not given but created (:35). The life of *Pung-Ryugeck*, who converted through the Holy Spirit, is to create new life for those who participate in the Cross and the Resurrection.

Consequently, these X, Y, and Z, which constitute the basis of the structure of the *Pung-Ryu* theology shown in the spiral triangle corn, indicates the original form, which divided into three, *han*, *sam*, and *mêt*. The vertex of the triangle, O, represents an unfolding direction of traditional religious cultures of Korea, so the content of O is *Pung-Ryudo*. Moreover, we can see the entire religious history of Korea is developing to one *Pung-Ryudo* from that the spiral formation. The entire religious culture of Korea is connected with Buddhist culture, Confucian culture, and Christian culture from the bottom. Therefore, the *Pung-Ryudo* is a process of the formation of *mêt* (:21).

3.3.2.1.4 Filial duty and *Pung-Ryu* theology

In his book *Korean Christianity and Ancestor Worship*, Ryu understands ancestor worship as a

confliction because it confuses the different views of God and humans between Confucianism and Christianity, and confuses religion with ethic (:100). In other words, the reason for the confliction between Confucianism and Christianity is a matter of definition, whether ancestor worship is religious or ethical. Although both agree that there is life after death and on importance of filial duty, the problem is that the ancestral rituals of Confucianism based on filial duty was understood as religious in early Christianity in Korea. Specifically, for the *sinju*, ancestral rituals are recognised as religious worship.

Nevertheless, Ryu did not recognise it as religious. Filial duty and ancestral rituals based on obedience, contrive for solidarity and reconciliation among families, and filial duty is the basis for rewarding forefathers' graces toward their descendants (1978:121). As we noted, *Pung-Ryudo* is about following the loyalty and filial duty of Confucianism, the good deed of Buddhism, and an ethical life without selfishness. Plainly, the essence of *Pung-Ryudo* is to love others in unity with God, and filial duty is a means to understand and realise *Pung-Ryudo*. In the *Pung-Ryu* theology, filial duty is positively recognised and promoted because it addresses the true character of human beings. Thus, the purpose of *Pung-Ryu* theology is to make genuine human beings.

Ryu stipulates that human beings as a whole are characteristic beings who stand before God, divided into spirit, body, and soul. Moreover, the criterion for living and dying is not a separation of soul from body but based on the kind of relationship with God. Similarly, the Christian concept of death and living concerns bodily death and the biblical meaning of death depend on the relationship with God. In Christianity, the matter is not physical, but relational. Personal relationship with God is life and a severance of the relationship is death. Therefore, for him, even the living could be the dead, and vice versa. For this living relation, Jesus incarnated and bodily death is not the end of life but has a sacramental meaning in fulfilling life (1983:93-4).

Ryu's insistence is that, if filial duty is a tool for actualising the true character of human beings and has an ethical meaning instead of religious one, ancestral rituals should be understood as lifetime rituals and sacrament. An ancestral ritual is not a meeting with a transcendental god in which the dead are transferred, but a ritual for the ancestor, who has gone the way of all human beings through death. In his eschatological understanding, the relationship with the ancestor is not one of severance but of continuity. For this reason, the religious and sacrificial character of

ancestor rituals is reduced.

3.3.2.2 Theology of *sung* of Yun Sung-bum as dialogue with Confucianism

3.3.2.2.1 Indigenous theology of Yun Sung-bum

Yun was also a main figure in the formation of indigenous theology in Korea in the 1960's. His theology was different from Ryu's in that he was more concerned with the quality of the soil than the character of the subject or the ability of the gospel, which is the seed, in his dialectical model of the 'seed-and-soil' (Yun. S.B 1964:100). His argument is that even the same seed can bear different fruits depending on the quality of soils. The religious culture of Korea can be a subject of indigenisation if we concede that the identity of the seed, which is gospel, could be changed depending on the soil (:21, 88). He does not deny the fact that relativism of the gospel could occur because of the differences in each culture. In other words, he emphasises the subjectivity of the local soil as much as the purity of salvation that is manifested in Jesus. (cf.1971:12-5). "Indigenisation of the gospel is not meant to limit the superiority of the gospel, but it is nothing other than self-examination when the gospel is accepted" (1964:103).

Yun's process of indigenisation is accomplished in three stages. The first stage shows that the gospel is meaningful only for the people who have subjectivity, and this can be related to Matthew 7: 6, "do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearl to pigs" (:89). This subjectivity means that a person becomes a personal companion who demands a 'subject-subject relationship', ignoring the subject-object relationship in the middle ground of gospel and culture.

The second stage is about accommodation, based on Matthew 9:17, "they pour new wine into new skins." For the reason that asking for a new skin means transference from non-primal subjective consciousness to new consciousness of subjectivity, it is certain that the matter will return to the Korean's character of spirituality. What this implies is that the Christian message and the traditional religious culture of Korea can be made mutually closer to accomplish mutual transplant, intermixing, and translation.

The third stage is of indigenisation, and is based on John 12: 24, "unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies; it remains only a single seed". The stage of indigenisation of the gospel is the process of the immanence of the transcendental gospel into Korea, and of incarnation

through self-denial (:98-9). Yun unfolds his theory of indigenisation through the process of encountering, dialogue, and accommodation. He searches for a methodology that will merge religious traditions of the gospel and Korean culture in *somsi* theory. Specifically he accepted Lee's notion of *sung* and identifies it with the word of God or revelation.

As an aftermath of the indigenisation disputation of the 1960's, in the 1970's, Yun's theology of *sung* attempted to describe the harmony between God and the world theologically, based on the oriental mentality, which considers harmony important. This arose with the realisation that the Western dialectical ideology Western based on the idea of structure of analysis and synthesis could not overcome the dichotomy of a dualistic disintegration between God and the world. Ryu's intuitive dialectic is comprised of *gam*, *somsi*, and *mêt* which we shall examine below.

As material, *gam* is divided in Korean culture into what is called form and content, and this is what the Christian gospel is presumed to be. Through the traditional religious culture of Korea, *somsi*, the skill of harmony, *gam*, as material accomplishes a perfect *mêt*. The theory of *gam* directly relates with a subjective understanding of Korean people in making a decision to accept or reject the gospel (:17). Yun attempts to examine subjective understanding through an analysis of *Dangun* myth. The ideology of the three gods of the *Dangun* myth, which are *whanwoung*, *whanin*, and *whangum*, closely resemble the concept of divine Trinity of Christianity and it can be imagined that the idea of the Trinity propagated to Siberian Christians was influenced by the *Dangun* myth (cf. 1978:79-81).

Secondly, just as the tastiness of *kimch* is dependent on the cook's *somsi*, (mixing skill), the worth of Korean culture could be found, a priori in the *somsi*; the skill of *somsi* is the beauty of harmony (cf. 1964:27-32). For him, the authentic *somsi*-dealer is Jesus Christ. Only Jesus is the true dealer of the word and the *Sitz-im-Leben*. The theological meaning of *somsi* is a skill of harmony, which is the reconciliation between God and human beings through the Cross and the Resurrection. Ryu founded this theory of *somsi* on the *sung* of Lee (:32-3). *Sung* sublates all conflicts and confrontation, and is the Korean *somsi* combines the content and form of the gospel transcendently. Therefore, for Yun, *sung* is a process of indigenisation in Korea and he affirms that *sung* is the adequate tool for causing Christian truth to prevail in Korea.

Furthermore, *mêt* is only found through *somsi*. Korean theology cannot be satisfied with the content and form, that is, with the relationship between the word of God and the religious culture of Korea. *Gam* can be considered as care, and through this care, a progress of beautiful balance

can be glimpsed (:33). This beauty of balance is likened to the jade green colour of *Goryeo* pottery, which is not exactly the colour of the sky, or of the soil, but is a mixture of the colours of the sky and the soil (cf. Kim G.S 1993:23). He understands *somsi* as the subjectivity of Korean culture, and its foundation is Korean-like. Thus, *sung* is the philosophical expression of *somsi*, but *somsi* also is another expression of *sung* (:22).

3.3.2.2.2 Confucian culture and Christianity - the theology of *sung*

As noted above, Yun locates the general idea of *somsi* in *sung*. He describes *sung* as an 'accomplished word', and understands its immanent and transcendental power as being able to unite God and human beings. *Sung*, which is at core of Korean ideology, can connect God and human beings. Hence, the notion of *sung* in Confucianism plays a normative role as mediator to harmonise and access the truth of Christianity (Yun 1972:61). He applies *sung*'s transcendental and immanent characters regarding the word to the mediatorship of Jesus. Moreover, he grafts *sung* into the Christian view of God. While the most familiar concept of God for the Western is revelation of the ultimate being, *sung* is the most familiar norm for the Oriental to describe God. As *sung* is transcendental and immanent at the same time, therefore, God is *sung* (:29). Again, *Sung* is related with the Holy Spirit. According to him, the being or *somsi* who creates the beauty of balance (*mêt*) is the Holy Spirit, and his work. Presently, the coming of Jesus is the coming of the Holy Spirit, and we can understand this as *sung* (:123). If one has no *sung*, he or she cannot become a genuine human being, as human beings have to abandon selfishness to earn *sung*. To return to *sung* is to return to the natural human state, it is an actualisation of faith, hope, and love (:144). Therefore, in *sung* men have a duty to live following the calling of God to recover a genuine human state.

3.3.2.2.3 Filial duty and the theology of *sung*

Yun proceeds to compare the Confucian concept of filial duty with Jesus' life of obedience to his heavenly father. He attempts to rediscover the gospel through the truth of Confucianism insisting that Jesus is an original example of filial duty. His concept of filial duty comes from an integrated view of religion and ethic. Comparing the ethics of Christianity and Confucianism, he argues that while Christian ethic concerns our conduct in terms of our belief, Confucian ethic concerns our conduct based on filial duty.

Moreover, just as faith and conduct are not divided dualistically in Christian ethic, filial duty and *in*, that is, benevolence, are also fused in the same principle. The question is then asked; 'If the core of Confucianism is filial duty, what is the foundation of it'? The foundation of filial duty is *sung*. While faith and deed are based on the Word of God, filial duty and *in* are based on *sung*, which is the way of heaven and earth. Based on filial duty to one's parents, the influence of *sung* on the community is demonstrably getting bigger. Filial duty manifests in, and *in* and filial duty reveal *sung*, whereas, *sung* is the starting point and the end-point of all things. Thus, filial duty is an actualisation of *sung*, a genuine feature that enables human beings to make a connection with the world. Yun sees this genuine feature in Jesus so that filial duty is not just an ethical relation between human beings, but becomes a religious relation as we see in Jesus (1976:102-11). Filial duty is therefore understood as corresponding with faith in Christianity (1974:78).

How then does Yun understand ancestral rituals? First, Confucian rituals in Korea are not a religious act like the *gut* of Shamanism, but an ethical matter. He explains that the main reason for this position is that in the Orient, decorum is only limited to the relation between human beings. Decorum is certainly a person-to-person relationship, and so is the relationship between living parents and their descendants. However, to appreciate the grace of parents, descendants perform rituals in front of *sinju*.

Yun further argues that the Korean church deals with this matter with mistaken judgment. When one loves anything, which is physical or non-physical, more than God that becomes an idol. Another issue is that he regards the interpretations and beliefs of our Christian ancestors as too literal, like Jewish legitimism. Therefore, ancestral ritual performance is not religious but an expression of decorum. To bow before *sinju* and a sacrificial table appear to be worship, but it is no more worship than bowing before a national flag. However, he identifies some conditions; if ancestral ritual performance is not a person-to-person relationship or its religious meaning sublimated, and if descendants do not expect blessings from the dead, then the rituals should not be regarded as idol worship. Specifically in his citation of 1 Corinthians 8:1-6, he argues that bowing and ancestral rituals are not stumbling block for the strong believers. Therefore, he urges that, ancestor matters might pass through the process of indigenisation (1968:693-9).

3.4 Intercultural hermeneutics of ancestor matters in Korea

As we have observed earlier, ancestor matters in the Korean context is understood as a

confliction between Christianity and the religious culture of Korea, which is mingled with Shamanism and Confucianism regarding salvation. The view of Shamanism on the ancestor worshiping and salvation is closely related to *han*. In the case of the ancestor who lived well in this world, he could become a good ghost and go to the world of the dead after a mourning period of three years. However, some ancestors who died with *han*, become a vengeful spirit, and cannot go to the world of the dead but wander in the heavens. A main theme of Shamanism is how to deal their *han*, how much and what kind of *han* do they have as ancestors who become vengeful spirits, roam the heavens and influence their descendants harmfully. These ancestors are the objects of fear for their descendants. Thus, the *gut* of Shamanism by *mudang*, that is, the Shaman, is a method of salvation of the vengeful spirit. After *mudang* has soothed the *han* of the vengeful spirit, this evil spirit or evil ancestor could then go to the world of the dead. The salvation of their *han* is accomplished by their descendants through the mediation of *mudang* (Lee E.B 2000:52-70).

In the Oriental religious view, it is rare to obtain salvation outside of sin-mediator-salvation ideology. In the Oriental view, the idea of sin does not have a religious but social character. While the Western idea, salvation is ultimate way of solving the human problem of sin, salvation in the Orient is a matter of discernment and knowledge (:262-3). It is not a salvation from outside, but a salvation of own effort through therapeutic knowledge (:264). A typical pattern of this is the view of salvation of Confucianism. A split from perfection is considered as the cause of all disasters, and perfection is considered as sacred and healthy. In Confucianism, therefore, the meaning of salvation is primarily a return from the secular to the sacred and from the separate to the total, which is the original state of human beings (:258-9). The Heaven or *sangje* in Confucianism is the origin of the world, from where human beings are ruled, and it is considered as the highest personal god. Humans can reach *sung* recognising and following the commandment of *sangje*, and this is salvation. The transcendental commandment of *sangje* is immanent in the character of human beings; the foundation of its realisation is *duck*, that is, ethical character. As a moral religion, Confucianism teaches the way of acquiring salvation by developing one's *duck* to match with the origin of *sangje* (Gum 2003:2-6). Thus, it is reasonable to understand that the view of salvation of Christianity was recognised as selfish in the Confucian ideology of salvation.

Confucians were perplexed by the Christian doctrine of salvation, which was considered similar to Buddhist mentality. Confucian morality encouraged one to be good without expecting any

reward or punishment. As a result, the salvation and ethical doctrines of Christianity appeared not only selfish, but also heretic (cf. Chung 1997:4-5).

They saw that the essence of worshipping God in Christianity is in order to gain personal salvation. They (Confucians) believed that seeking heavenly blessing and avoiding punishment in hell came from a selfish, benefit-oriented mind in human beings. Such an egoistic motivation stood in contrast to the Confucian moral idea of sincerely preserving the goodness inherent in human nature as conferred through a reverential fear of heaven. Confucianism was simply devoted to the problem of how to become a person by actualising authentic human nature without any selfish motive, whereas Catholicism approached God with the utilitarian motivation of seeking blessings in heaven and avoiding calamities in hell (:3).

There has been disputation about salvation with regard to ancestor worship and rituals, whether it is just a traditional culture or a religious one. Obscure distinction between ‘religious’ and ‘cultural’ in the Korean context was considered problematic. For example, the disputation concerning bowing to ancestors, which is an important part of the ritual, is about whether it is religiously related to the salvation of Shamanism and Confucianism, or the cultural tradition of Korea?

3.4.1 *Perichoretic* evaluation of ancestor matters in Korea

This section is about the *perichoretic* reconstruction and evaluation of the religious cultural tradition, specifically ancestor worship, in the encounter with Korean churches. Our purpose is to investigate the possibility of opening intercultural communication through the application of mutual space, mutual indwelling, and mutual identity in traditional religious culture of Korea.

3.4.1.1 Mutual indwelling

3.4.1.1.1 Mutual penetration in Korean ancestor matters

The meaning of mutual indwelling is continual penetration; Christianity should incarnate into culture continually. The cultural expression of it is dynamic communication. This principle can also be applied in the situation of Korea. For example, Choi considers the work of Fenwick (early Western missionary in Korea), as a giant step in the indigenisation of Christianity in Korea

because he recognised “the principles of subjectivity and mutuality” (Choi K.B 1989:347). Fenwick decisively attributed his success on indigenisation in Korea to a Korean-like sacrificial devotion (Fenwick 1911:127-8). How then can this Korean-like sacrificial devotion or the actual meaning of incarnation open space for communication with the religious traditions of Korea? More importantly, how can it make intercultural communication possible if we consider that, the disputation over ancestral matters is over a hundred years old and has caused an epistemological division between Christianity and the other cultures?

The question of whether or not ancestor worship in Korea is a religious or purely cultural expression has resulted in too much exhaustion within the Korean indigenisation theology, and it appears useless to dispute it anymore because there is neither a pure religious expression nor a pure cultural expression. The pluralistic religious expression that ‘religion is culture’ and the counter-cultural expression that ‘religion is not culture’ are both expressions of the ‘old dichotomy’ between religion and culture (Bosch 1991:456). Moreover, the emphasis of considering a theology as ‘too local’ (:456) in the encounter between religious traditions and Christianity can also cause territorial dichotomy. We shall consider the old dichotomy in the indigenisation disputation through the theologies of Yun Sung-bum and Ryu Tong-sick, and how this dichotomy can be an obstacle for mutual penetrating between religious cultural traditions of Korean and Christianity. Additionally, we shall examine how the monologue structure of their indigenous theologies usher a one-sided or colonial mission structure in dialogue.

3.4.1.1.2 Exclusivistic and functional structure in indigenisation theology in Korea

We can observe functional and exclusivistic structure of culture and the gospel in the theologies of Yun Sung-bum and Ryu Tong-sick. As we noted in Chapter 2, these structures are phenomenenal when we do not consider the relation between culture and the gospel in the ‘culture vs. culture’ structure, which is a dualistic view. Then theologians who indigenise their culture could not justifiably treat it as a subject of cognition but treat it as an object of mutation to be functionally manipulated. In particular, the colonial mission structure emanated from an exclusivistic attitude of the first era of Korean mission suggesting that the Christian culture of Korea is subordinated to the Western Christian culture. Jun Kyung-yên, who occupied a middle ground in the indigenisation disputation between Ryu and Yun, is a spokesperson for an exclusivistic attitude that is based on a colonial mission view.

We have noted the seed-soil theory, which sees the gospel as the seed and culture as the soil, in Ryu's *pung-ryu* theology. Ryu contends that the problem is not whether or the traditional religions in Korea have room for salvation, salvation can only be found in the gospel of Christ. The views of the religions of Korea on salvation are dependent on how they reflect the gospel of salvation in Christ (Ryu 1989:123). For Park, the hermeneutical structure in his indigenous theology is a structure of monologue (Park J.C 1991:72-3). His indigenous theology and his hermeneutical view of traditional religions of Korea are lopsided instead of a communal circulation between the gospel and the traditional religious culture of Korea.

However, Ryu's theology does not ignore the subjectivity of the religious culture of Korea. Kim mentions that his theology involves the grafting model, making the 'subject-subject' encountering possible. He explains that the benefit of this model is to make possible the subjectivity of both the gospel and the traditional religious culture of Korea, and to make mutual illumination and mutual growth possible, in terms of a hermeneutical circulation (Kim K.J 1994:215). In addition, the 'subject-subject' meeting might guarantee an equality of both subjects. In *Pung-ryu* theology, the self-subjectivity has a minor role, whilst the Western subject has a principal role. This signifies a lack of equality. While he argues that Christianity has to be understood in the traditional religious culture of Korea, if this traditional religious culture is already interpreted as functional translation in Christian viewpoint, how then can we recognise it has equal subjectivity? Thus, when Christianity regards the traditional religious culture of Korea as functional, it cannot ensure justifiability from other religious cultures in intercultural communication regarding the equality of mutual subjectivity.

On the other hand, Ryu translates the logos of Christology through the ideology of *doh*, which means truth, and the Divine Trinity through *Dangun* myth. Park criticises Ryu's interpretation of the process of indigenisation in the principle of translation thus:

That he made his observation through functional translation as a prime theme not only gives an un-rightful burden for the hermeneutical subject to embrace, and to explain a universal truth of original meaning; but he also forgets the distance between the text and our context (Park J.C 1991:72).

In the disputation between Ryu Tong-shik and Jun Kyung-yên in the 1960's, Jun (cf. 1963: 86-88) reflected an exclusivistic attitude, which prevailed in Korea at that time. In the disputation of 1963, he divided Christianity and culture, and then argued that the Western Christianity is a

universal one. For him, we cannot think without Western Christianity because the primitive gospel grew on Western soil, fought with false faiths, formed the culture of the West, and sustained it for over 1900 years. As a result, this Western theology is the original gospel. The role of the gospel is to exist, as it is wherever it goes; it cannot be changed into a culture because the gospel and culture are different. Only Western Christianity can be regarded as universal Christianity and for Jun, the existence of regional theologies or particular Christianities should be rejected.

Jun (cf. 1963:90) contends that “Ryu’s indigenisation theology through the *Dangun* myth is a result of inquisitiveness because he does not know the history and universality of Christianity.” His ideology recognises a dualistic idea, which divides culture and super-culture, from a colonial attitude in mission. These colonial attitudes regard other religious cultures as fixed attempt to control them because of their qualitative differences. Moreover, based on his exclusivistic view, he considers Ryu’s indigenisation theology as religious pluralism or theology of compromise, even though Ryu’s viewpoint is actually close to inclusivism. It is not too much to state that his exclusivistic attitude speaks for the most conservative of Korean theologians.

In his ‘seed-soil theory,’ Yun Sumg-bum, differs with Ryu, as he was more concerned with the fertility of the soil than the seed itself. In other words, even if the seed is same seed, it can bear different qualities of fruit. Yun argues that the identity of gospel, which is symbolised as seed, can change depending on the quality of soil. He also opposes Ryu’s theology, which is explained through translation. Nevertheless, the problems of exclusivistic dualism and functionalism can also be identified in Yun’s indigenisation theology.

First of all, his framework of *gam*, *somsi*, and *mêt*, can be made to correspond with the preparation stage, the method, and the unfolding process of the result. In the theory of *gam*, he uses an idea of *a priori* or Bultmann’s *vorverständnis* (pre-understanding) to explain the relation between the gospel and culture. It is possible to establish a matter and to interpret it through *vorverständnis*. Therefore, for Bultmann, the *vorverständnis* is compulsory for understanding the gospel. When he applies the idea of *vorverständnis* to the religious culture of Korea, he also deals with the traditional culture of Korea as accessory for understanding the gospel.

If we do not have adequate information about traditional religious culture of Korea, there is great possibility of accepting Christianity as a way of thinking and an expression of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Shamanism. However, if we have adequate knowledge of

these religions, Christianity will not be mixed, and accepted, as it is now (Yun 1963:31).

Consequently, Yun's application of *vorverständnis* or the attitude to the other religious tradition of Korea is exclusivistic, even though he emphasises the *Sitz-im-Leben* in his theological structure. Kim criticises Yun for wandering between Barth's pneumatology and hermeneutics based on Bultmann's *vorverständnis* (Kim G. S 1987:51). What kind of role does Korean culture that he sets as *vorverständnis* play in its problematic relation with the gospel? Yun believes that without *vorverständnis*, sound indigenisation is impossible. On the other hand, he claims that the indigenisation of the gospel is not achieved in the form of projects, and cannot also be rectified artificially but cultivated gradually through continual encountering (Yun 1963:29). The problem is that for him, *vorverständnis* is just one a way of separating the pure gospel from the Korean religious culture. In other words, his focus is not seeing the religious culture of Korea as the subjective *other* but translating Korean culture in a Christian-like way.

This view is clearer in his seed-soil theory. He gives tangible examples of the matters of receptive capacity, subjectivity, and indigenisation of the gospel as biblical foundation for indigenisation. In another sense, the receptor can only accept the gospel on self-subjectivity. In content, his model resembles the history of redemption, (*jowhami*); the beauty of harmony accomplished through a dialectical process of the *Sitz-im-Leben* and the gospel of *gam* by *somsi*.

Therefore, in form, it signifies the mutual operation between Christianity and Korean culture but in the seed-soil theory, the traditional religious culture of Korea is treated passively and peripherally without vitality, and is not considered a viral subject. The role of the religious culture of Korea is not mutually operated, but translated functionally in the relationship with the gospel. We can understand the reason we have to consider his theology of *sung* as only having formal subjectivity but lacking standard in terms of interculturalisation, which guarantees mutual subjectivity, in the interpretation of the *Dangun* myth when encountering Christianity and religious tradition of Korea in detail.

He translates *Dangun* myth into Christianity one-sidedly and functionally, considering the *whanin*, *whanwoong*, and *whangum* in the *Dangun* myth as originating from the Divine Trinity. His stance is a functional attempt to translate the Western frame, (specifically the Western theology adopted from Bultmann and Barth) to the religious culture of Korea considering culture as an object of one-sided transformation by the gospel. Therefore, on account of the fact that these two modern indigenous Korean theologians still do not recognise the subjectivity of the

religious tradition of Korea, they treat the relation between the subjectivity of Christianity and the religious culture of Korea as an unreasonable monologue structure. Additionally, we clearly can note the colonial attitude to mission regarding subjectivity of Korean culture in the theology of Jun Kyung-yên, who holds an exclusivistic view of indigenisation.

3.4.1.1.3 Mutual indwelling and ancestor matters

A functional attitude to ancestral matters can be observed from the early period of Korean mission (cf. Beck J.G 2002: 128). The Mission Board of Korea focused on a similarity between *Sangje* of Confucianism and the Jehovah of Old Testament Israel to explain the Christian God, who is distinguished from the transcendental beings of paganism. In Confucianism, *Sangje* is the prime ruler over the entire world and the ruler over human history. He was the only one that all wise emperors of ancient times worshipped. It is also believed that idol worship began in the *Han* Empire (206 B.C - 221 AD).⁶¹ Western missionaries who worked in China blamed idol worship and ancestor worship on ignorance.⁶²

The Korean Mission Board also took a similar stance. It admitted that *Chosên* did not worship idol but *sangje*. “In ancient time *Chosên* people only believed and worshipped *sangje*, over time, people forsook the truth to serve false idols.”⁶³ The Korean Mission Board translated the idea of *sangje* to the one of the Christian God and insisted that originally, ancient Koreans worshipped *sangje*; those who did not know him started to worship gods including their ancestors. This argument is similar to Paul’s address in Athens (Acts 17:22-31), but it reveals a functional shortcoming because it forgets that when Christianity recognises others as others in encountering, the nature of Christianity is revealed and it finds own identity. Therefore, the shortcoming of functionalism is that when openness disappears, people become attached to operationalism.

Subsequently, a functional attitude toward ancestral matters became crucial in Korea’s indigenous theology. If a functional attitude is applied to ancestral matters, the inclination toward ancestor worship merely means normal etiquette although, it is not mere etiquette to bow in front of ancestors in Confucianism; it contains elements of prayer for fortune or misfortune to the beings, and this makes it a religious act. Hence, one would be careful before deciding on

⁶¹ *Myochukmundap* (묘축문답), 9.

⁶² *Shangdejili* (상테진리), 4.

⁶³ *Kwanjungweji* (권중회지), 8.

substitutes. The importance of bowing in ancestral rituals in Korea differs from offering flowers to the dead in Western culture. The biggest blind spot of functional translation is that when the subject translates the object, it is operationalism, which tends to translate by adopting the closest meaning in the target culture, ignoring a deeper meaning of the culture. In Korea, bowing before *sinju* has a religious connotation. In this regard, analysing ancestor worship as having ethical meaning as Yun Sung-bum and Ryu Tong-shik have done is not the right method of indigenisation.

In the case of Yun, Oriental decorum is a matter of ‘men vs. men’; ancestral ritual practice based on filial duty, which is an important decorum, might also be considered as ethical, and not religious. He considers bowing before *sinju* or preparing a table to be offered in sacrifice as cultural manners that express admiration for the dead. Comparing the issue to Paul’s reference to food sacrificed to idols in 1 Corinthians 8:1-6, Yun claims that the matter of bowing to dead ancestors is cultural manners which strong believers ought to accept fully (Yun. 1974: 693-9). In contrast, other theologians such as Park Gun-won argue that Confucian rituals for dead ancestors are religious rituals because they ask the dead for protection for the family. From the 13th century, ancestor gods served as spiritual support for family and community. Initially, in Chinese Confucianism, ancestor worship was a peculiar duty of emperors, and then it gradually became popularised. The core of Oriental philosophy is that the universe is composed by *ee*.⁶⁴ All human beings finally go back to *ee* after death. It is believed that *ee* could connect the descendants with the dead ancestors in their line, especially through ancestral rituals. In the rituals, descendants remember their ancestors and sacrifice rituals on food tables, and the ancestors qualified as ancestor gods. Ghosts or gods without descendants, or those who died abnormally could also get into the order of ancestors instead of wandering the heavens with *han*.

Ancestral rituals performed to serve ancestors as protecting gods of family or community do not fall into the category of ghosts with *han*. Therefore, ancestral rituals are not just rituals of memorialisation or admiration of the ancestors, but a sacrifice to a heavenly god with a plea of blessing for the family (Park H.S 1988: 37-8). Thus for Yun, ancestral rituals or its forms in Korea are representative examples how Confucian cultural tradition functions in terms of ancestor gods. It is important to make clear and recognise the sameness, difference, and distinctiveness between Christianity and religious traditions of Korea in gradual intercultural communication in order to open mutual space. This functional operation is not a way of

⁶⁴ *Ee* is the origin of the universe or composing material.

intercultural communication but a one-sided or colonial view.

In conclusion, Christianity might break from the functional and colonial approach to intercultural indigenisation in the encountering phase with religious traditions in Korea regarding ancestral matters. Again, while Christianity could recognise the subjectivity of the other, it could also find own subjectivity to open mutual space as the cultural 'subject vs. subject'. At this point, we shall investigate how ancestral matters encounter and open space for communication with Christianity in the context of Korean religious tradition.

3.4.1.2 Mutual space and ancestor matters

Whilst mutual indwelling deals with the epistemological aspect of Christianity's encounter with other cultures, mutual space deals with the methodological aspect, that is, how Christianity deals with other cultures in a practical way. The concern is how a personal third space could be opened. Here, the personal space that Buber insisted on is not an abstract area. On the contrary, he wanted to become an intermediate being who places himself in between the communicators as a solution to human alienation. While he did not place himself as an observer or interpreter of the meeting, he committed himself into the meeting sphere. Further, we can recognise other aspects of personal mutual relation from Levinas. As we recognise the existence of others before we consider them as possession structure, we can see a sort of demand in the face of the other. Therefore, Christianity can only hear the voice of God in the personal relation with the other; it becomes challenged, and is able to reflect itself. The person moves from his role as a self-centred subject to a responsible subject to the other.

This is a norm of *otherness* or the African philosophy of *ubuntu*, which is used to overcome the blind spot of Western philosophy. Here, mutual space opens through *praxis*, which is specifically related to incarnational devotion. We have already examined the premise for opening communication, mutual subjectivity, dynamic and contextual character as aspects of the basic structure of Buber's acquirement of communicational sovereignty through devotional *praxis*, and Levinas' learning through the face of the other. How then can these premises of intercultural communication, namely, mutual subjectivity, dynamic and contextual character, open space for communication in practice and create a structure of devotional *praxis* in encountering with ancestral matters?

There were some attempts to open communication space through the medium of filial duty from the early era of Korean mission. For example, Underwood states that “the means of escape for Christianity on Confucianism soil is to show examples of filial duty as a feeling of shame for their own tradition when their parents are still alive” (Underwood 2000:95). His attitude toward ancestral matters in the early mission period became a model for other missionaries coming after him as well as for the Korean Church.

In many cases, from a functional and colonial attitude this space is made one-sided. On the exclusivistic ground, Wi Hyung-yun remarks that there are no commonalities between the God of Christianity and *chun* or the ancestor god of Confucianism, and the background of filial duty is also different. Nevertheless, it is beautiful to serve the living parents and have admiration for and remembrance of the dead ancestors since filial duty is a common value that the teachings of both Christianity and Confucianism recognise. However, it is inevitable that the differences in epistemology and worldview be expressed differently (Wi 1998:184). In a sense, this assertion seems impossible to communicate without giving up the viewpoint of one side because the “communication between Christianity and Confucianism is a collision between Pantheism and Creationism” (Lee D.J 1998:196).

As we mentioned above, Yun has a functional attitude in his indigenisation theology, which stipulates that the three gods in the *Dangun* myth represents distinctive family ethic in Korea, and he connects this to the Christian concept of Divine Trinity. For him, filial duty is the accomplishment of *sung* and a real feature of human beings for connecting with the world. Moreover, he reckons that the original ethical axle of Christianity is the relation between a father and his children, but there is a Western distortion of this relation, which he regards as an ethical corruption.

Further, Yun argues that there is a moralised view of God in Christianity, and religionised ethic in the Korean position. He then attempts to correct the Western morality through filial duty in the indigenisation of Christianity. He assumes that space could be opened through the medium of filial duty based on the viewpoint that the Trinity is translated functionally into the theology of Korea. Most attempts on religious communication concerning ancestral matters could be involved in these two stances. How then can Christianity effectively open communication space in intercultural concerning ancestral matters?

3.4.1.2.1 Mutual subjectivity and ancestor matters

The most problematic issue is to consider if there is a way Christianity can change subjectivity in religious dialogue without losing self-identity. As we suggested, Christianity is not a completed being, it is still in process, moving for completion with others. A way is to recognise learning communication from the otherness of the other or from mutual subjectivity that is not to open space through the commonality of each religion. The mutual subjectivity could be the primal condition for opening space to communication between Christianity and religious tradition in Korea in considering ancestor matter.

Moreover, filial duty could become a good tool for opening communication space in terms of ancestral matters in Korea. Most Korean theologians focus on filial duty, which is a commonality, and considered it as primarily important for both sides. As we noted, Yun Sungbum for example, simply combines the norm of filial duty of both sides, and then made it a theme for communication.

Ryu also suggests communicating through the commonalities between the memorial service of Christianity and traditional *chesa*. He insists that even if ancestral rituals of Confucianism have religious factors, but through ancestral rituals, we move toward God, who made our present and past (see chart below). However, Confucian ritual has *chun* as the foundation of its ideology, *chun* is not to be treated as a personal being like the God of Christianity. He claims that; “If we consider that serving our parents is to follow God’s will; we can find a new solution through this commonality” (Ryu S.H 1987:177).

		Christianity	Confucianism
Conceptional Aspect	Gratitude to Grace	Praising and giving glory to God for his grace	Giving sacrifice to ancestors for their grace
Procedural Aspect	Devote to	Prepare for the service	Prepare for the ritual after death
	Relationship By blood	Faith community in Jesus Christ	Physical community with ancestors
	Giving Offering Pious Manner Leader	Offering to God Devotional manner during Service Normally head of the family or ministers	Prepare food table for ancestors Devotional manner during service Normally head of the family gives
Consequential Aspect		Give thanks to God, and make commitment to serve God	Thanks to ancestors and unity of family through ancestors

Table 1. The commonality between memorial service of Christianity and ancestral ritual of Confucianism
Ryu S.H (1987:175-6)

To make space for communication in terms of commonality is grounded on the hypothesis of substantialism that all religions have common features and have to realise the features to be recognised as true religions. Inevitably, communication without recognition of the traditional subjectivity of each religion becomes one-sided. Thus, communication needs to be initiated from the differences in filial duty between Christianity and Confucianism. A distinctive feature of filial duty of traditional religions is that while filial duty is important when parents are alive, in ancestor worship of Confucianism the concern is more for the dead ancestors than the living. This is closely related to the Confucian view of salvation as well as to the socio-cultural structure. Here, the dead ancestors are remembered by ancestral rituals of the descendants and the descendants are in turn protected by the dead ancestors. Again, ancestor worship has to be understood within its socio-cultural function as sustaining the hierarchical ethic system of the whole society because filial duty is prompted by a sense of duty to one's parents or a sense of loyalty to the emperor.

We shall examine some distinctiveness between Christianity and Korean religious traditions with

respect to filial duty. While Christians serve only God, Confucians express god-like admiration for their dead ancestors, who can communicate more personally than *sangje* or *chun*. In Christianity, Jesus is the only mediator.⁶⁵ In Shamanism in particular, the traditional *moodang*, who is the Shaman, acts as a spiritual mediator the dead and the living to release the dead from *han*. Moreover, in the Confucianism tradition, the dead ancestors act as mediators to protect from *chun*, and keep the descendants in safety. Considering the condition of the dead and the communion with the living, the Christian belief is that the dead is taken into the place for the dead (heaven or hell), and they cannot have any communion with the living. On the other hand, the traditional religious idea on this matter is that the condition of the dead is divided in two, while those who died in peace and at old age can get into heaven, those who died miserably are eager to be released from *han* as they wander in heaven.

However, if they become an evil god, or they get into heaven, ancestors can keep relationship with their descendants. Regarding the role of the dead toward their descendants, in Christian belief, the dead cannot do anything for their descendants while in Korean traditional religion Korea, the dead can curse or bless them. Blessing from the dead had one condition, that is, devotional worship through ancestral rituals. In the case of an evil god or ancestor, their descendants perform rituals for their *han* to be released because of the belief that curses and misfortune on the descendants are sometimes caused by the *han* of the dead ancestors.

Considering the functional character of ancestral matters, the function of a Christian memorial service is to cherish the dead, and to reflect on what the ancestors did in God, and then make it an opportunity to consolidate belief. It is also a time to gather the whole family in communion and a time to be comforted in God because of the belief that the dead is in heaven with God. The ancestral rituals in Korean traditional religion have two functions. The first is the religious one; this institution of ancestral rituals is an expression of the belief and the desire to continue to live through the ancestral rituals, even though the ancestors have died physically. In other words, through ancestral rituals, the dead can be redeemed and ancestral rituals can be performed only through qualified descendants. The spirit of the dead dwells in the *sinju*, at home with the descendants and the ancestral rituals are actually offerings or holy meals to serve them.

Again, ancestor worship is a kind of social system and reflection of culture that is used to solve the dilemma of what happened between generations. Parents get into the fear what happens after

⁶⁵ In Roman Catholicism, saint Mary or other dead saints can play the same role. This is based on the teaching of purgatory.

death when they would have handed all things over to their children. The children have to express filial duty continually, a burden that society has officially put on them. Based on filial duty, the ethical order in ancient society was erected as well as royalty to emperors, which they believed is connected to the filial duty to parents.

With respect to the character of salvation, Christianity insists that there is no salvation by any other means except through redemption in Jesus Christ. However, ancestral worship in Korean traditional religion is all about salvation by own effort. Filial duty, which is the core of ancestor worship in Confucian principle, is the most effective way to gain *sung*. Filial duty is considered as the method to attain the highest state for human beings; therefore, Yun compares it to the faith of Christianity. Continual expression of filial duty through ancestral rituals is a method and process for the salvation of the dead as well as for salvation by one's own effort.

If this distinctiveness is recognised, how then can we open mutual space for communication? We can find a way to open mutual space in the ancestral rituals and filial duty, and especially in their meanings. It is a way of opening communication through the meanings contained in ancestor worship and memorial service but it is not a way through a functional operation of commonalities or a colonial attitude to interpret regional culture one-sidedly.

Son, Bong-ho insists that for some reasons, the meaning of ancestor worship in the Korean context has changed. One of the reasons is that Koreans no longer use Chinese character because of its difficulty, therefore modern Koreans are not familiar with complicated processes that function with Chinese character. Secondly, the necessity of ancestor worship is reducing because Korea society has already changed into a nuclear family society. Moreover, "people tend to simplify ancestral rituals because of the influence of the individualism of the Western culture" (Son B.H 1996:51-2). The definition of ancestor worship is getting narrower than in the past because ancestor worship is a product of an agricultural society but today's Korea is already a post-modern society. In spite of these factors, we cannot ignore the urge to retrieve traditional culture as a reward for the forfeiture of traditional culture and human values, which resulted from rapid industrial development. In this regard, to fulfil the meanings of ancestor worship for Koreans is an opportunity to open communication space for Christianity.

In his 1987 research, Ryu placed emphasis on sustaining balance and intimate feeling among family members who perform ancestral ritual. He observes that 75% of highly educated people,

who live in a nuclear family setting, show that they are eager to find intimate feeling among family members through ancestral rituals (Ryu 1987:115).

Choi Sung-su understands that the reason why even those who are converted to Christianity remain passionate about ancestor worship is that they gain a sense of family communion through ancestral rituals, which they could not get from Christianity (Choi S.S 1998:120-2). Jung Jin-hong suggests that 'the community which eliminates the dead is a truthful community. Christianity might supply religious experience that traditional rituals, which the dead is also with the living in a community (Jung J.H 1984:74-5). Kim Y.I (1995:251) insists that the spirit of ancestral rituals has a universal dimension in that it puts the worship of God over ancestor worship.

Gum adduces three meanings to ancestral rituals, namely, respect for one's own life, ethical function, and social function. Firstly, the respect for one's own life is based on the ideology that human beings do not disappear after death but gather to *ee*. Although the individual disappears with the body, he can preserve his individuality through the descendants, who are his other selves. If the individuality of human beings is preserved by continuation of blood relation, then ancestors are the foundation of these lives and the criterion for individuality. Ancestors make up one's feature and identity, which have to be kept faithfully. Therefore, to respect one's ancestors, is to respect one's own life (Gum 1986:73-4).

In this regard, Park Jae-moon (2002:111-33) suggests that ancestor worship enables one to find his or her foundation as a transcendental being and to recognise ancestors and follow them. In addition, ancestor worship is regarded as an opportunity for an expression of gratitude and self-examination (Kim Y.I 1995:251). Secondly, as we mentioned, the reason why ancestor worship has ethical function, is for filial duty, which is the foundation of ancestor worship. Filial duty is also considered as the foundation all ethics. In addition, ancestor worship connotes the respect of human beings for God. Respect for God should come with whole-hearted devotion, which overcomes human arrogance and laziness. Devotion and piety become the foundation for cultivating all other virtues. If one serves God with a pious character, all other ethical conditions will be fulfilled, and then this morality can exalt divine nature (Gum 1986:75). Park (2002:22) further notes that through ancestor worship people develop solemn and sacred minds.

Thirdly, social meaning is also important. The basic unit of nation or society in Confucianism is

the family; both nation and society are extensions of the family. The organisational structure is centred on the head of family, but ancestors are at the apex and the descendants are at the base of the bloodline. In this system, ancestors are served through ancestral rituals, and their descendants continually act as custodians of ancestral values thereby sustaining the society (Gum 1986:76-7). Janelli also maintains that; “considering correlations between inheritance, family development cycle, and lineage functions, the social organisation rather than ideology, has exerted great influence on Korean ancestor worship” (Janelli 1982:188).

In Korea, the definition of ancestor worship is diverse, and its priorities have become weakened, but its meanings are not faded. Thus, the next section examines which ‘meanings’ of Christian memorial service open mutual space with the traditional culture of Korea. Opening space through meanings is a method of intercultural communication, which does not ignore mutual subjectivity.

3.4.1.2.2 Dynamic nature and ancestor matters

In the perichoresis of Divine Trinity, dynamic nature is defined as mutual penetrating in terms of culture. This dynamic nature of communication cannot be satisfied with mechanical mutual penetrating or mutual equivalence; it has its foundation in the humiliated love and devotion of the Trinity God through Jesus’ incarnation. Dynamic communication in Christianity is possible with self-emptying devotion and enduring practice of communication in love. Therefore, intercultural communication is not only a matter of equivalence but also a matter of *praxis*. As Levinas explains, the real meaning of being a subject is to accept, love, and be devoted to the other. Consequently, to open communication with other religious traditions in Korea involves *praxis*, which dynamically shows them incarnational devotion and love; it is a life issue. As Barth indicates, *praxis* deals with ‘man for the other.’ Christianity can communicate with the traditional religious cultures and people of Korea through devotional *praxis*.

i. Becoming human - ‘seeing with the eyes’

A person cannot see himself without the eyes of another. This truism is connected with openness toward the other, which is based on equality. However, equality in Christianity on which the openness toward the other is based in the communicational phase, differs fundamentally as it is based on the *praxis* of devotion and sacrifice. Devotion here is not the same as Bosch’s, as he

understands devotion as a devotion to the gospel, that is, it is “not simply sacrificing one’s own position... and witnessing to our deepest convictions, whilst listening to those of our neighbours” (Bosch 1991:484).

Nevertheless, devotion is not merely sacrificing one’s own position or listening to those of our neighbours, but becoming open to things seen in the face of the other. If we apply this to Korea’s traditional religious culture of ancestor worship, and we listen carefully to the deep meanings that the face of ancestor worship is showing us, then this will open us to the other. Listening to the meanings of ancestor worship in Korea is a method of communicating with the other without bias and without distortion of the gospel. This is not necessarily openness to forms of ritual, such as bowing or offering at the food table, but listening to the inner voice of these worshippers, attending and responding to them.

ii. Reciprocal visibility

Openness alone does not guarantee intercultural communication; spontaneity is the premise of dialogue. Spontaneous humiliation of incarnation guarantees the relation between listening and speaking. Intercultural meaning of humiliation is continual concern for the other. We can direct communication through this continual concern for the other. What Bosch refers to as this mission of humbleness as a form of repentance is quite correct (:514). What does it mean for Christianity to listen to the other, which is the traditional religious culture in Korea? Is it a mere listening to the meanings of ancestor worship? Listening means repenting as Christianity also listens to own voice through the Holy Spirit after being informed of the meanings of ancestor worship.

Devotional mission is not possible when the Church is standing before the other, but when we are standing before the Cross. Bosch admonishes that; “in the presence of the Cross, the church-in-mission has to repent before it engages in mission” (:514). This is a process that crucifies our weakness, after the reality of our condition is revealed through repentance. Therefore, this spontaneity is an expressed mode of Christianity humbleness, which comes from repentance. Jesus used this same principle when he came and addressed us in humbleness and weakness. Our attitude to ancestor worship then should be like that of Jesus who spoke to us with humble and devotional qualities. He did not ignore our miserable worth but responded and acted in devotional manner. This teaches that Christianity can meet and fulfil the meanings of the other if

the features of the church in encountering others are like those of Jesus.

iii. Mutual assistance

Mutual assistance starts from the response of calling the face of the other. Openness and the attitude of reciprocal visibility as continual concern become conditions for responding to calling the face of the other. It means life with the other and reminds us of Bonhoeffer's classical expression, 'church for others'. He claims that; "the church is the church only when it exists for others... the church must share in the secular problems of ordinary human life, not dominating, but helping and serving" (Bonhoeffer 1971:382, cit., in Bosch 1991:375). However, Sundermeier rightly evaluates Bonhoeffer's view as he argues that; this helper syndrome of pre-existence jeopardises the possibility of the true existence. Instead of talking about 'the church for others', we should rather speak of 'the church with others' (Sundermeier 1986: 62-65; cit., in Bosch 1991: 375).

The meaning of the word 'with' is not about attitude, but about *praxis*. This can be interpreted to mean that the mission-church is 'with' the meanings of ancestor worship in Korea but this *praxis* of 'with' is not merely undertaken to help others. According to Levinas, when serving the other, the self-subjectivity in authentic meaning, that is, the so-called subjectivity of devotion is erected. One who gives assistance already exists as a receiver, according to Levinas' notion of the 'face of the other'. In this regard, Christianity should learn the meaning of traditional ancestor worship. As noted above, the meanings of ancestor worship are balance and intimate relationship among family members, expression of gratitude and longing, finding the origin of one's being (as a transcendental being who bears resemblance to the ancestor) It also includes social and ethical meanings. There is a need to strengthen the memorial service of Christianity as a character of ritual in a way that, at the same time, the Korean church might be able to live with the Korean religious traditional culture through the meanings of ancestor worship.

iv. Mutual gladness

Levinas argues for "dia-chrony" before all dialogue. This emphasises that the subject is not a being for himself, but for the other, and when he serves the other, he can then enjoy genuine gladness. This does not imply spontaneity of devotion but rather dialogue, for those who know genuine gladness in serving others because of devotion. When Christians serve others with

praxis in intercultural communication, they can enjoy genuine gladness; and others can obtain this genuine gladness in the life of Jesus Christ. When Christianity, first encountered Confucianism, Confucians regarded it as having an egoistic view of salvation but the common people found this Christian view of salvation very attractive. Confucianism taught that the way to attain *sung* is to regard it, as a social duty without any conditions, to attain *sung* is a method of salvation. Diverse low systems based on filial duty were suggested as the way to attain *sung* and complicated steps and ways of ancestor worship are considered the most important means of attaining *sung*. Nevertheless, it was impossible for the common people to follow these complicated rituals because of economical and practical reasons. Therefore, attaining *sung* was out of the reach of the common people, but was only practicable for the royals.

One of the main reasons Christianity rapidly spread among the common people in the first era after the *Jinsan* accident, is that salvation by Jesus Christ was presented as the authentic gospel and the hope of the common people. Even if they did not follow the common knowledge of *Chosên* that the way of salvation is to attain *sung* through ancestral rituals, the way of salvation was guaranteed. This alternative brought gladness to the common people.

Mutual gladness is not a one-sided phenomenon. This gladness happens when others are changed through the devotional *praxis* of the subject; the other can rejoice for the gospel of love and the authenticity of Christianity that he discovered in the gladness of the devotion of the subject. In this regard, the Korean church needs intercultural communication through the medium of filial duty in the context of an individualistic and industrialised society.

In relation to this, Chung (1990:15) notes that; “the problem churches face regarding the cult of ancestors are intertwined with the problem of how they will come to terms with modern culture. More specifically, what they have to cope with is the egoistic individualism that prevails in post-traditional society” This statement adequately reflects the situation in Korea regarding intercultural communication. Nevertheless, questions arise. Can the Christian model of filial duty fulfil the meanings of ancestor worship in the context of modern Korea? Moreover, can the meanings be transformed into new Christian-like meanings? There are no immediate answers. However, providing answers to these questions becomes an assignment for the Korean church as it continues to strive for dialogue with traditional religious culture in Korea. This matter automatically ushers us the matter of contextuality.

3.4.1.2.3 Contextuality and ancestor matters

It can be observed that authentic contextuality is composed of the creative tension between the formal accord of universal factors and the dynamic equivalence of the variable factors of culture. However, contextuality entails monitoring dynamic and continual communication, which is expected through devotional *praxis* and this happens daily at the market place. The contextuality in the mutual space, which recognises variability, needs the dynamic life of Jesus. As Jesus invited the disciples saying, ‘come and see’, the authenticity of the truth is guaranteed every day in the existential determination, which opens us to the other’s contextuality and universality. For the dynamic contextuality of ancestor worship, monitoring the changing meanings of filial duty in Korea seems the most effective way to open mutual space. The meaning of filial duty has organic and dynamic characters, which have been changed from the ancient to the modern society in Korea. Therefore, dynamic monitoring of the changing meanings of filial duty is crucially needed in Christianity, for the creative *praxis* of communication with Korean culture.

At this point, we also need to recall that the traditional ideology of filial duty in Korea’s ancient agricultural society comes from the *Dangun* myth. According to this myth, the reason for practising filial duty is that parents are incarnated from heaven and are able to release blessings on their descendants (cf. Ryu S.G 1977:57). Again, in ancient times, Koreans considered the importance of dead parents as well as the living parents. They also believed that the dead ancestors could have relationships with their descendants to protect them and intervene on their behalf by sending prosperity descendants (cf. Byun 1985:55-69). Moreover, because ancient Korea was an agricultural society, ancestor worship was regarded as a means to sustain and dominate the clan society.

The era of *Samguk* (B.C 18 - AD 668) and *Tongilsila* (AD 668 - 935) witnessed the acceptance of Confucianism and the ideology of filial duty was later introduced in detail through books. Nevertheless, *Tongilsila* developed its own ideology of filial duty differently from that of China because this kingdom remained a matrilineal society. Kim D.H (1958:156) remarks that; “*whrangdo*,⁶⁶ and their belief in *Maitreya*⁶⁷ were the evidence of their unique development of filial duty”.

⁶⁶ *Whrangdo* was a national system for appointing civil servants. Filial duty and loyalty were required for them.

⁶⁷ *Maitreya*, *Bodhisattva* (Sanskrit) is a future Buddha of this world in Buddhist eschatology. As Christians expect imminent return of Christ, Jews await the Messiah, and Hindus look for the coming of Krishna; Buddhists expect *Maitreya* Buddha.

In a later development, the era of *Korye* (AD 918 - 1392) adopted Buddhism as the national religion. It integrated Confucianism, which functioned in the real life while Buddhism acted as a spiritual foundation. The ideology of filial duty was of course, developed in the integrated shape and even combined with Shamanism, which continually influenced Koreans initially on an elementary level. Later, in *Chosên* (AD 1392 - 1910), Confucianism became the official religion and the norm of filial duty became well developed in practice and in theory. Specifically, filial duty in *Chosên* stressed practical filial duty based on self-sacrificial love for one's descendants. In the 20th century, Korean society experienced too many changes within a short period. The meaning and practice of filial duty, which was the spiritual and ethical strut of Korean religion, changed. Korea has experienced a transformation from an agrarian to a post-modern society; from an extended family system to a nuclear family system; from community oriented society to an individualistic society; from a patriarchal society to a genderless society; and from a society whose ethic was based on filial duty to a society now maintained through a diverse law system. Besides, people no longer consider filial duty as a means of obtaining *sung*, that is, the way of salvation. Although many people are still devotees of the *mudang*, who is the Shaman, now Koreans seldom use them to release the *han* of the dead ancestors. This means that the role of Shaman as a mediator has become abbreviated.

It is important for Christianity to reflect on these issues in dynamic communication with ancestor worship in Korea. If the Korean church is willing to consider memorial service as an important avenue for opening mutual space, these changing contents and meanings could be continually monitored. This suggestion is different from the method, which functionally translates commonality. In this approach, the Korean church can meet the needs of Koreans in matters relating to ancestor and filial duty as it considers the changing context and thought of Koreans, and as it monitors these changing meanings. This is a devotional contextuality, which is open to the other's contextuality and universality. Through this, Christianity might recognise not only their own contextuality but also the contextuality of the other; this is a premise for devotion to others and a premise to find own identity in the incarnational communication.

Although, the meanings of filial duty and ancestor worship have changed and faded in the context of Korea, there are still some problems in the encountering phase. The first one concerns the norm of the ancestor. The view is closely related to the Confucianism view of God. The dead are not clearly distinguished from *chun* (or god) in Confucianism and the term 'ghost' is

associated with a divine origin and spirit of *yin* and *yang*.⁶⁸ Ancestral belief is based on two factors, the pantheistic idea of equality of god and man in which the spirit of the dead goes back to *ee* or the Great Absolute, and the Shamanistic spiritualism that if descendants performed ancestral rituals piously, the dead ancestors can smell it. The meeting point of these two factors is ancestral ritual. In the Confucian ideological system of pantheism, ancestral gods are considered as heavenly gods, and ancestors only become object of worship because “ancestor worship is considered the same with *chun* worship” (Lee D.J 1998:49-50). These beliefs are still affirmed by modern Confucians and by many who perform ancestral rituals (Kim B.W 1985:51). In this regard, question of mutual identity still needs to be settled. It can be used to orchestrate the weakening of the salvific meaning of Confucianism, whilst strengthening memorial service as a character of ritual. It is important for intercultural communication to grant not only a biblical meaning for ancestral rituals but also a socio-ethical meaning. Before we conclude, it is worth noting that concerning devotional *praxis*, Western missionaries did not insist that it should be accomplished with an exclusivistic attitude; it was a way of mutual learning. Could mutual learning indeed become the key to resolve the matter of mutual identity?

3.4.1.3 Mutual identity

3.4.1.3.1 Meaning of mutual identity in ancestor matters

Earlier, we attempted to address the issues of mutual identity based on commonalities. In particular, we noted the problems of exclusivism and functionalism, which are resulted from the attempts of Yun Sung-bum and Ryu Tong-shik regarding commonality. Agnivesh maintains that one can open mutual space, as well as solve mutual identity problems through features of spirituality, which are common to religious traditions (Agnivesh 2006:185-208).⁶⁹ Nevertheless, same religious experience cannot be the commonality for intercultural communication. In the same manner, if Christianity and other religious traditions of Korea have commonalities in terms of filial duty, religious background and meanings of these commonalities cannot be the same. The object of ancestor worship may be the same but the norm for ancestor in Christianity traditional religions in Korea cannot be the same.

⁶⁸ *Yin* and *yang* are generalizations of the antithesis or mutual correlation between certain objects or phenomena in the natural world, combining to create a unity of opposites.

⁶⁹ His approach is dialogue of spirituality, based on J. D Gort’s classification of ‘four levels of dialogue,’ which are dialogue of theologies, dialogue of history, dialogue of spirituality, and dialogue of life. His paper, ‘Inter-religious Dialogue in Historical and Ecumenical Perspective’ was presented on 24th July 2007 at a seminar in Stellenbosch University titled of ‘Challenges Facing Ecumenical Witness’.

In this study, shall consider mutual identity from the perspective of the *praxis* of ‘with’, and not through Smith’s way of commonality and notional distinction of exclusivism, inclusivism, and religious pluralism. We shall follow the deductive path, which places stress on ‘with’, departing from the existing manner of mutual learning, which suggests an ambiguous future. ‘With’ is formed when the subject meets the other in the mutual space with his entire incarnational life. When the subject encounters the other in the space of ‘with,’ he carves out a meaning for this space through devotion and sacrifice. In other words, when Christianity opens up to the other through the devotion of ‘with’, it cannot realise its own identity until it sees a faulty feature appear in the face of the other. This is how Christianity can learn from the other.

In addition, the subject who finds his imperfection, and authentic identity, which is love, through the encounter with the other in mutual space, experiences the repeated *praxis*, which is made by the calling of ‘with’. This calling is the attraction toward mutual space, which needs devotion of the subject. In this process, the imperfect identity of the subject has the authentic identity, love, which is the core of the *perichoresis* of the Divine Trinity in devotional communication. Furthermore, this imperfect identity of the subject is in the process of becoming perfect through the communication of ‘with’. This establishes a relation between the devotion of ‘with’ and identity. In the Korean context, there have been two attempts to find identity in ancestor worship. One of them is the theocentric approach, which tries to guarantee the identity of the subject through common images of a messiah in each of the religious traditions. The other Christocentric approach gropes for religious peace by evaluating the identity of Christianity relatively.

3.4.1.3.2 Theocentric approach to securing identity in ancestor matters

If a theocentric approach is defined as finding common images of a messiah in the religious traditions, Chong Yag-yong could be regarded as one of the first scholars to search for commonalities between Christianity and Confucianism based on the messianic images of filial duty and ancestor worship. The world consists of human beings and nature but the human being was not divided; even the ultimate being *chun* (heaven), in relational way, is not lopsided transcendence. In Confucianism’s monistic view of god, the God of Christianity also becomes missing with the norm of Confucian philosophy known as *Young Myong –Ju Jai Chon (Sangje)*.

It should be noted that the God of Christianity reveals himself either directly or through the

prophets. But *chun* is recognised in Confucianism as being revealed through *sung*, that is, intrinsic attribute, and nature. *Young Myong –Ju Jai Chon (Sangje)* grants not only *sung*, but also participates in developing it. The method is not direct but is through the mediation of ghosts or gods. In other words, *sung* contains messianic images of Confucianism. It is also believed that performing filial duty to obtain *sung* corresponds to the faith of Christianity because ancestral rituals to the dead are also considered as a way to *sung*. This ideology could be found in Yun Sung-bum's theology of *sung*. As we noted earlier, the harmony between human beings and nature is in the *sung*, if the *sung* of the human being is complete, the *sung* of nature also becomes complete. The mediator for harmony here is *sung*, and contents of or the method for attaining *sung* is ancestor worship. For Chong Yag-yong, the God of Christianity is understood as *Young Myong –Ju Jai Chon*; this idea shows that each religious tradition has its own peculiar name for the ultimate being.

Secondly, he recognised diverse ways to reach the ultimate being or the truth according to own traditional religions. The role of gods is to rule human affairs and nature by the command of *Sangje*. The entire world is the merit of gods and all the wonders of nature are traces of gods. Even if with the granted *youngmyung* they protect the world, their origin comes from *chun*. Thus, when one performs rituals to various gods, it is also worship to *Sangje*. Chong Yag-yong distinguishes *chun* from various other gods, but he assumes that all worship rituals to these gods are actually to *chun*. He affirms that *Sangje* is the origin not of only formless spirits (including the human soul), but also of gods and he is the only ruler of both material and formless worlds. For Chong therefore, ancestral worship is nothing else but worship to *Sangje*. His monistic ideology that integrates Christianity and Confucianism as the way to reach the ultimate being was one among many windows to the truth. The meaning of the subject can be recognised in this ideology but the historicity itself is denied. Once again, we might recall that the identity of each religion could be found in its distinctiveness. The attempt to find messianic images to guarantee subjectivity is weakened by religious pluralism, which also relativises the identity of the subject.

3.4.1.3.3 Christocentric approach to securing identity in ancestor matters

Neither Yun Sung-bum nor Ryu Tong-shik is classified as a Christocentric inclusivist among indigenisation theologians. Nonetheless, their indigenous theologies are highly characterised by inclusive features as far as ancestral matters are concerned. Kim Gwang-sick criticised Yun's inclusive view, which presupposes that *sung* means all things. He argues that that could include

the Trinity God, revelation, and even Christ. Everything can be projected through *sung*, but nothing can be deduced from this norm and only in this meaning and relationship can Christianity and traditional religions of Korea meet (Kim G.S 1991:12).

Furthermore, he criticises Yun for his attempt to harmonise the subjects of Christianity and religious tradition of Korea based on inclusive foreign elements. He faults Yun's theology for its passive subjectivity, and his claim that in the final analysis, the surviving theology is the Western Christianity. Yun's basic idea is that our religious cultures are imperfect, but they can become perfect with the acceptance of Western Christianity. He insists concerning the *Dangun* myth, that even if the origin of the Divine Trinity God is in the *Dangun* myth, it could not be developed whilst Christianity developed Trinity as a theology. Similarly, Confucianism did not develop *sung* as theology, so Christianity might develop as theology of *sung* (Yun. S.B 1974: 202). In the background of Yun's ideology, there is inclusivism, which regards the meaning of Christianity as a completion of the traditional religious culture in Korea.

For Yun, the filial duty for the heavenly ancestors is the foundation of the filial duty for the living ancestors, and the filial duty for the living ancestors in turn become the foundation of knowledge of the heavenly ancestors (1976:105). In this regard, Yun describes the three gods in the *Dangun* myth, as distinctive ethic for family kinship in Korea, and then attempts to connect this with the Divine Trinity God of Christianity.

On the other hand, Ryu's concern is how traditional religious cultures of Korea can become the means for the revelation of Christian God, and how they influence Koreans to form a religious ideology. Ryu views the religious traditions of Korea as playing a satellite role, reflecting the light of the gospel of Christ when Christianity was not yet introduced in Korea. He uses inclusivism as a basis for his theological work. He urges that if traditional religions, which form the religious culture in Korea, redeemed Koreans before the advent of Christianity, then, Koreans could accept the universality of the gospel through knowledge, forms, and language of traditional religions. He attempts to open the possibility of communication between Christianity and Korea's religious traditions through this inclusive ideology. He declares that; "I use this method to understand the diverse world of religion through the symbolic system of a specific religion. I therefore, opt for the symbolic system of Christianity" (Ryu T.S 1990:130). His intention to reveal the universal religious mentality of Koreans through the symbolic system of Christianity contains Christocentric inclusivism, that is to say, he wants to accomplish religious

truth in the mentality of Koreans through the symbolic system of Christianity. The problem of inclusivism here is to weaken the historicity of the subject considering it as merely qualitatively different.

3.5 Conclusion: Holistic approach

As a foundation for *perichoretic* communication, incarnation has to guarantee historicity and existential actuality simultaneously. The historicity of incarnation might stress the uniqueness and the finality of Christianity, simultaneously; the existential actuality stresses the dynamic character of incarnation, which is revealed presently in the Christian life through the Holy Spirit. This is incarnational communication, that is, it becomes the basis for understanding *perichoretic* communication holistically. More specifically, the historicity of the identity of the subject is guaranteed through the Holy Spirit continually whilst, the actuality is revealed through the life of ‘with’ of Christians. Hence, the historicity of the identity of Christianity is actualised in the dynamic relation of ‘with’ in the mutual space. The voice of the Holy Spirit to us, who live the incarnational life in the actuality of ‘with’, comes as a burden through the face of the other. It means that love is the subject of incarnation, which invites us to live in the mutual space, makes us return to our own space for reflection, and then, commands us to return to the mutual space. In the light of these facts, the identities of the subject and the object can be accomplished through the holistic balance of historicity and actuality, and their lives.

In the light of the issues addressed in the foregoing, many questions come up. How can integral communication guarantee historicity and actuality in the communication between the subject and the object regarding ancestor matters? What kind of challenges does Christianity encounter in the face of Koreans regarding ancestor worship? Is this merely the face of Confucianism, endorses the religious and socio-ethical system of family-society-nation-god based on filial duty and royalty? Do the differences with the traditional religious culture come as a challenge to Christianity? If what we can encounter on the face of the other is the eagerness to find the meaning behind ancestor worship, how do we have deal with the meanings, which are hidden from the face of the other? What is the role of incarnational *praxis* of devotion here? Finally, how do we resolve this matter with respect to historicity and actuality of ancestor matters?

We have already discussed what the face of Korean expects from Christianity with respect to ancestor worship. Such expectations include; sustaining balance and intimate feeling among

family members who perform ancestral rituals, accenting the consciousness of family kinship, respecting for own life, and an opportunity for the expression of gratitude. Others are self-examination, obtaining a solemn and sacred mind through ancestor worship, and descendants continually keeping the values of their ancestors. Ancestor worship as social function is a key to sustaining society.

In addition, we have examined the problems of historicity. It has been shown that discord emanates from the different meanings and viewpoints of God, the mediatorship, the state of the dead, the role of the dead, and the function of ancestor worship. More specifically, while Christianity serves only God, Confucians express god-like admiration to their dead ancestors, who can communicate personally with *sangje* or *chun*. Concerning the role of mediator, Jesus is the only mediator. However, in Shamanistic tradition, the *moodang*, who is the Shaman, as a spiritual leader also performs the role of mediating between the dead and the living to release the dead from *han*.

As for the role of the dead toward their descendants in Korea's traditional religion, the dead can curse or bless their descendants. Additionally, in the Confucianism tradition, the dead ancestors act as mediators to protect their descendants, and to keep them in safety. As a religious function, the institution of ancestral rituals is an expression of a belief that the lives of ancestors can be preserved or redeemed through ancestral rituals, even though they are physically.

Consequently, it is possible to deal with the meanings of ancestor worship, as the thirst to find meaning can be read on the face of the other. Our concern here is that when we investigate the actual meanings of ancestor worship, we should be careful not to encroach on the historicity of the meanings. The way out of this dilemma is to handle ancestor matters holistically. This approach recognises the identities of the subject and the object whilst maintaining a balance between historicity and actuality. With respect to ancestor matters, this can be achieved through the method of devotional *praxis*.

CHAPTER 4

ANCESTORS IN DREAMS AND THE XHOSA WITNESSES

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is a literature and empirical research about Xhosa Christians of South Africa. The main purpose of this chapter is to unlock the theological and missiological identities of certain Xhosa Christians in terms of ancestor matters. We shall investigate how the religious and cultural identities of these Christians have been transformed in the mission history of their encounter with Western missionaries. To evaluate the identities of Xhosa Christianity in encountering with missionaries and mission churches, we shall focus on one issue, namely, ancestor matter, which is one of the most important bases of their lifestyle, philosophy, and even religion. As we observed in Chapter 3, in the ancestor-oriented society of South Korea, the churches are still influenced by ancestor-oriented culture and its related socio-religio-cultural structures.

Similarly, among Xhosa people, the meanings of ancestor worship and ancestor religion are “being revitalised at present rather than losing ground” (Kuckertz 1981:8). Whatever the reasons for revitalising this worship, it is clear that many Xhosa Christians still dream about their ancestors. Certain questions will be addressed in the course of our investigation. What are the problems of ancestral Xhosa tradition in intercultural and intracultural encountering with Xhosa churches, and subsequently with Korean missionaries? How can Xhosa churches explain their theological cultural identity in terms of ancestor worship in the encountering phase?

To answer these and other questions, we shall begin by familiarising ourselves with basic information on Xhosa concerning ancestor matters, the demographic context, religious ideology and ancestors of amaXhosa (Xhosa people) including, the Supreme Being and ancestors, ancestor beliefs (*Izinyanya*), death and ancestors, the meaning of ancestors and ancestral rituals, and the role of Shaman. Afterward, the theological views of the Western mission and mission churches to ancestor matters, and the responses of Xhosa Christians to ancestral matters and their indigenous interpretations shall be discussed. It is also necessary to do an empirical research on the perspectives of Xhosa churches in Khayelitsha on ancestral issues.

4.2 Ancestors in dream - a basic research on Xhosa Christians

In this section, the literature study is in two parts, the demographic context of Khayelitsha area and its contents on ancestor related matters. The aim of the study is to use its basic information for intercultural evaluation and for constructing empirical research contents afterward. Thus, to make the study effective, we shall focus on the religious cultural dimension, avoiding unnecessary details regarding content and scholarly systems for ancestral study.

Life after death is not a matter of argument or speculation in Xhosa ideology of death. Ancestors are referred to as 'living dead' (Mbiti 1990:85) in Xhosa religious tradition and they have intimate relationship with their descendants who believe and experience them as mediators in certain ways. From birth to death, one's life cannot be separated from ancestors. It can be observed that various Xhosa ancestral-oriented religious cultural rituals have been performed even in urbanised Khayelitsha. Our main concern in this section is to consider all these ancestor related matters missiologically.

4.2.1 Demographic setting

According to the recent government census of 2001, the majority of Xhosa still occupy the Eastern Cape area even though some of them have moved in among the other regions for several econo-political reasons. It can be observed that Apartheid related edicts made the Xhosa to stream into new places. The empirical research area, Khayelitsha, is the third biggest black township in South Africa (next to Soweto and Mdantsane), and the most compact urbanised Xhosa township in population. The reason for the urbanisation and migration of Xhosa from their homeland, Transkei and Ciskei, is primarily socio-economical. The Group Areas Act passed in the 1950s prohibited Blacks from living in the cities but the discrimination and Black population control by the Apartheid regime did not prevent Blacks from settling in the outskirts of Cape Town. In the early 1980's, the Apartheid government decided to move all 'legal' Black people from existing townships to a new township. Government data classified people as legal if they had already lived in the area for ten years. As the population grew, and the search for jobs intensified, the new township Khayelitsha, which means 'new home' was established in 1984 as the latest Black township in the Cape Town suburb. Consequently, about 24% of Xhosa people are currently living in townships around Cape Town turning them into huge Black townships. These include the biggest township, Khayelitsha, which is the focus of this research.

According to the South African 2001 census, the total population of Xhosa people was 7,907,153. Out of these, the Xhosa people in the Western Cape are 1,073,951. In Khayelitsha, 329,002 amaXhosa were counted representing 96.8% of the entire population of Khayelitsha. The growth rate of this area is approximately 5.3% per annum between 1996 and 2001, resulting in an increase of 79,000. Therefore, by 2006 the population estimate was about 500,000 according to South Africa government documents.⁷⁰ This estimate, based on the growth rate from 2001, also corresponds with the survey conducted by African Leadership⁷¹ in 2007, which puts the estimated figure at 493,743.⁷²

4.2.2 Religious ideology and ancestors of amaXhosa

4.2.2.1 Supreme Being and ancestors

According to Pauw H.C (1994:117), Xhosa beliefs are expressed in different ways, “the belief in a Supreme Being, the belief in the influence of the ancestors, and the belief in magic and its application for good or for evil purpose”. Since it is closely to ancestral matters, we need to examine the Xhosa belief in the Supreme Being. The earliest names for the Supreme Being among the Xhosa were *U(m)dali*, the creator, and *uMvelingqangi*, the one who appeared first. Other names, which have a Khoikhoi origin are *Qamata* and *T(h)ixo*. However, the term *uThixo* is most generally known by the Xhosa. Soga (1932:150) states that; “the widespread use of this term *uThixo* dates from the time of the first advent of missionaries to the Xhosa”.⁷³ This name is also used in the Bible translation into Xhosa. The other names for the Supreme Being in Xhosa are *umdali* and *uQamata*, which are in a sense, praise names, which mean ‘father of blessings’ and ‘maker of all things’, respectively (Pauw H.C 1994:117-8). The *uThixo* is not only the creator and maintainer of the cosmos, but also the first ancestor and for that reason; the *uThixo* becomes accessible through the ancestor spirits (*izinyanya*). The ancestor spirits also receive

⁷⁰ see, http://www.capegateway.gov.za/Text/2006/11/simelela_one_year_report_optimised_2006.pdf. Accessed on 25/03/2007.

⁷¹ African Leadership is an international Christian mission organisation based in the United States with branches all over the world. A Korean-Canadian missionary Um Y.H built the South African branch of African Leadership in 1996. This mission organisation works in South Africa (specifically among Xhosa people), Madagascar and Lesotho. Their mission is comprised of Bible College, church planting, children’s ministry, sports ministry and job creation.

⁷² Unpublished document by African Leadership.

⁷³ According to Hodgson, the reason the term, *uThixo* became dominant was missionary influence. “There is a strong move today to replace the name *uThixo*, which is regarded as having been foisted on them by the missionaries with *uQamata*”. Nowadays the people desire to recover the name, *uQamata*. This is related to current tendency to recover past traditions and black culture and it goes together with the resurgence of the ancestor cult (Hodgson 1982: 104-5; Thomas 1999: 64).

their power and preparation from him. There is thus, a close bond between the Supreme Being and the ancestor spirits (Pauw 1994:118).

Soga introduced the religion of Xhosa as monotheistic because their “belief in a supreme, and only one God, on the part of a race or tribe, is an indication of monotheism” (Soga 1932:149). His view of the origin of the religion of the Xhosa is certainly influenced by his Jewish background. He denies that the character of the Xhosa religion is animistic, like the other Bantu tribes arguing that; “the animistic character ascribed to it is due undoubtedly to the fact that worship is never offered to the Supreme Being directly, but through the medium of the ancestral spirits” (:150). Animism originally means the doctrine of spiritual beings, including human souls. It is often extended to include the belief that personalised, supernatural beings (or souls) endowed with reason, intelligence and volition inhabit ordinary objects as well as animate beings, and govern their existence. This can be stated simply to mean that; everything is alive, everything is conscious or everything has a soul. Soga does not correctly define the idea of animism, as it seems that traditional belief of Xhosa is a mixture of animism and ancestor worship in nature. They believe that their ancestors are live in certain natural settings such as, in the cattle kraal, in the river and everywhere their descendants are found (cf. Hunter 1979:36).⁷⁴

Hodgson’s insistence that Xhosa originally had a monistic worldview is more persuasive and supports the idea that the religious idea of Xhosa was animistic. In monistic idea “no distinction can be made between sacred and secular, between natural and supernatural” (Taylor 1963:64). Theron (1996:3) also affirms that; “the whole world or cosmos is considered as a unity. There is no distinction between the secular and profane, between religion and the worldly”. Therefore, God (Supreme Being) could be regarded as ancestors. As Staples claims in his study of Southern Bantu, “Among many of the people of Africa concept of deity has been so vague” (Staples 1981:94). Furthermore, they are more familiar with their ancestors who have been recognised as mediators between them and the Supreme Being. For example, Anna, of the *AmaQaba* clan in Transkei, is reported as having said the following:

There is a God (*uThixo*) but I do not know him. I know my ancestral spirits, *Izinyanya*. They live close to God and next to me. If I displease them they will make me sick or cause me sorrow or hardship. I do not pray or talk to God but in my dreams my ancestral spirits appear to me, sometimes happily, as last night when in my dreams I talked face to face

⁷⁴ In of the case of the Koreans, the belief is that dead ancestors dwell in *sinju* whilst the dead who have *han* wander in the heavens.

with my grandmother. At other times the spirits are displeased. When displeased the spirit says he or she is hungry and wants meat and will describe the animal he wishes to be sacrificed (Broster 1967:45).

Theron maintains that Africans operate a hierarchical system in which the “Supreme Being as the creator is placed at the top of the hierarchy. Beneath it are the other or lesser divinities, spirits and the ancestor spirits, and human beings and nature appear next, in this order” (Theron 1996:3). Oftentimes however, ancestors are not distinguished from the Supreme Being. They describe ancestors as ‘good father’ or ‘big ancestor’, and make statements, such as, “I think life is better up there since *uThixo* is a good father...ancestors are there with *uThixo* who is a big ancestor” (Bigalke 1969:71). The Supreme Being is “thus seen as a quasi-ancestor with whom people’s ancestors intercede on behalf of living” (:73). Sipuka (2000:119) also remarks that; “the ideas of God bear little significance in the religious system of the Xhosa”. The other forms of the supernatural, that is ancestors, are more significant in their belief system. In this regard, the idea of the Supreme Being of Xhosa seems very much similar to that of *Chosên*, which we studied in chapter 3. Although, they believe in the Supreme Being, people only vaguely distinguish between the ancestor and the Supreme Being. Often times, the ancestor is also considered in the same horizontal plane with the Supreme Being or is considered as a sort of mediator between the world of gods and the descendants.

However, in Bujo’s view, the African concept of the Supreme Being does not seem vague or animistic. He explains from another perspective that Africans always consider the idea of community first. This community is not limited only to the visible but the invisible including, dead ancestors, those not yet born and even with God – and this is the religious character of *ubuntu*.⁷⁵ He claims that dead ancestors are involved in the past community, while those not yet born are involved in the future community. In this regard, he argues that; “Africans tend in practice to speak about human beings rather than about God; this is due to the view that one who pays heed to the dignity of the human person also pleases God” (Bujo 2001:20). For him therefore, the notion of the Supreme Being in African might be understood in more various dimensions, which should be integrated. It is not that the Xhosa people have not distinguished between ancestors and the Supreme Being per se, but when they meet ancestors *in memoria*,⁷⁶ they actually meet the Supreme God integrally.

⁷⁵ See *ubuntu* in chapter 6.

⁷⁶ See Bujo’s *Foundations of an African Ethic*, 2001, chapter 2

4.2.2.2 Ancestor belief (*Inkolo yezinyanya*)

Izinyanya is based on the belief in the survival of the human being after death and the mutual influence that the living and the dead have on each other. This belief may be understood in line with the *ubuntu* and *memoria* in Xhosa culture. At first, the *ubuntu* concept of the *other* is not merely a human relation, but a religious other or religious respect for the other as a religious other. In African traditions, the “other person includes ancestors, so the person is to become through other person is ultimately, an ancestor.”⁷⁷ In the religious conception of *ubuntu*, the living and the dead are still in communion and depend on each other.

Secondly, ancestors are included as family members as they are still remembered by their families. The notion of ‘ancestor’ is unique in African philosophy and is difficult to understand from a Western viewpoint. To understand African notion of the ancestor, we may first need to recognise the meaning of time, flowing from what is known as the *Sasa* to the *Zamani*. For Africans, “time is not moving forward into the future, but rather back into the past. The past provides the motivation and support for the present” (Theron 1996:7). Thus, ‘the *Sasa* period moves backwards and moves over into the *zamani* period. *Zamani* is the termination point of time’ (Theron 1996:8).

As the individual gets older, he is in effect moving gradually from the *Sasa* to the *Zamani*... death is a process which removes a person gradually from the *Sasa* period to the *Zamani*. After the physical death, the individual continues to exist in the *Sasa* period and does not immediately disappear from it (Mbiti 1990: 25).

Mbiti prefers to refer to the dead as the living-dead instead of ancestor.⁷⁸ According to him, while the dead is remembered by name, he is not dead but he is still alive in the memory of those who knew him in his life and is equally alive in the world of the spirits. He explains that; “when, however, the last person who knew the departed also dies, then the former passes out of the horizon of the *Sasa* period; and in effect he now becomes completely *dead* as far as family ties are concerned. He has sunk into the *Zamani* period” (:26).

⁷⁷ Dirk J. Louw. *Ubuntu: An African Assessment of the Religious Other*. www.bu.edu/wcp/Paper/Afri/AfriLouw.htm.

⁷⁸ “Ancestral spirits or ancestors are misleading terms since they imply only those spirits who were once the ancestors of the living. This is limiting the concept unnecessarily, since there are spirits and *living-dead* of children, brothers, sisters, barren wives and other members of the family who were not in any way the ancestors. One would strongly advocate the abolition of the two terms 'ancestral spirits' and 'the ancestors', and replace them with 'spirits' or 'the living-dead' whichever is applicable.” (Mbiti 1990:85)

In essence, the living-dead have to be remembered. Furthermore, in African thought, the dead externalise themselves through procreation. From this point of view, the ancestor familiarises himself with their common life and the departed is externalised in acts such as respecting the dead, giving food to them, pouring out libation and carrying out instructions given by them. According to Mbiti, the practice of remembrance here is nothing like the so-called ancestor worship; their distinctive norm of death originates in the concept of time, which is integral concept of time. In Bujo's term "practice through *memoria* cannot remain on an abstract, theoretical level, but leads to concrete consequences" (Bujo 2001:61). In this regard, mutuality between the living dead and the descendants is also considered. According to the norm of *Sasa* and *Zamani*, ancestors can live in mutual influence with their descendants. Ancestors have more power than the descendants in the hierarchical order, and they are closer to *uThixo* than the descendants for the same reason.

4.2.2.3 Roles of ancestor and ancestral rituals

The roles of the ancestors are closely related to the attitude of the descendants. The people believe that "the neglect of the ancestors as well as the violation of habits and customs will result in ill-luck and disasters" (Pauw H.C 1994:118). They reveal themselves to the descendants in different ways such as through dreams, diseases, and in the form of clan snakes. More importantly, ancestors can sometimes express their rage through illness or misfortune, to warn the descendants and make them correct their ways. Pauw notes that ancestors give misfortunes to their descendants for good reasons whilst witches for instance, bring these from an evil purpose (Pauw B.A 1975:61). This implies that the main role of the ancestors is to protect their descendants and Pauw suggests that; "another role of ancestors is mediatorship with God and the descendants" (1963:40-1). For Oosthuizen (1991:21), "people approached the ancestors as often as they called upon God asking the ancestors to be intermediaries to God". In addition, Thomas (1999:66) claims that; "since God created the universe and all matter, the ancestors are considered to be the framers and supporters of the world in which their descendants live". However, the main role of ancestors toward their descendants is to guide them in the right way to go and to protect from all misfortune. Even though the people recognise *Thixo* as the Supreme Being, who watches over his entire universe, they believe that ancestors are concerned with their everyday life, health and property including their cattle and crops; the Xhosa look more for the blessings of their ancestral spirit. "The result in effect, is that the cult of the Xhosa is that of ancestor worship" (Elliott 1970:126). The people believe that the Supreme Being and the

ancestors are working together, and that prayer and sacrifice to the ancestors is at the same time to prayer to God (cf. Pauw B.A 1963:40).

Ancestral rituals are life-oriented, for Xhosa people. “Sacrifices are made during the different rites in the life-cycle as normal occurrences. The ancestor spirits are thus closely involved in birth, initiation, marriage and death, and share in this way in the joy and sorrow of the living” (Pauw H.C 1994:120). Different authors categorise the Xhosa rituals differently for instance, according to the occasions and the purpose of sacrifice. Hammond-Tooke (1978:352) classifies the rituals into two. The first consists of the life-cycle rituals, that is, the sacralisation of important stages in the life of individual while the other consists of contingent rituals, which are performed in response to specific stimuli, in particular, to illness divined as sent by ancestors for some neglect of custom. On the other hand, Lamla (1971:24) recognises four categories, namely, sacrifices connected with God and ancestors; sacrifices connected with economic activities, sacrifices connected with other events such as rainmaking, and war, and lastly, initiation sacrifices. For Sipuka (2000:136), the sacrifices are sorted into four stages, namely, birth, initiation, contingent and death sacrifices. All Xhosa rituals are ancestor-related; the recipients of the ritual sacrifices are always ancestors.

Further, Pauw H.C (1994:121) remarks that ancestral rituals are performed by one of the sons or the kraal head on behalf of the family, by the lineage head (*intloko yemilowo*) for the lineage as a whole, and by the chief for the entire tribe. These roles are similar to those in the Korean system in some respect but there are also some distinctive factors. Whereas Xhosa rituals are related to animal sacrifice or blood shedding and are performed in the kraal or the river, Koreans prepare traditional foods for rituals and perform them in front of the *sinju* or tomb.

There are several traditional rituals in Xhosa; birth rituals ⁷⁹ (*Ukufuthwa, Imbeleko and Ingqithi*), initiation rituals (*Umphumo wabakh-wetha, Ngcamisa, Ojisa, ukubuya and Intonjane*), Marriage rituals (*Umngcama, Umthula-ntabeni, Impothulo, Ukudlisa amasi, Umdudo and Umphako*), contingent rituals (propitiatory sacrifice, diviner’s initiation sacrifice, supplication sacrifice, communion sacrifice, thanksgiving sacrifice and ostracism sacrifice), death rituals (*Ukukhapha, Ukubuyisa, Iinkobe and Ukuguqula*), and other important or solemn rituals (cf. Sipuka 2000:136-51).

⁷⁹ These rituals are translated into Xhosa as some of them were used in the questionnaire.

In modern setting, most of rituals are still practised but some of them are fading out and are being modified. However, from the researcher's personal investigation, some rituals that are still preformed among the modern Xhosa include, *Imbeleko* (a thing with which to carry on the back), *Ukwaluka* (boy's initiation), *Intonjane* (girl's initiation), and *Ngcamisa* (announcing the ceremony to the ancestors and requesting their blessing). Others include, *Ojisa* (to make one roast), *Ukutyiswa amasi* (to be fed with sour milk), thanksgiving sacrifice, *Ukukhapha* (to send off), *Ukubuyisa* (to bring back), *Intselo* (beer drinking), *Intlamba peki* (immediate ceremony after death of some one in a family), *uzico* (to wear black clothes for six months) and *Ukukhululwa kozilo* (celebration after *uzico*).

4.2.2.4 Role of diviners or *sangomas*

Basically, Theron (1996:97) distinguishes between “medicine men, who practice medicine in public, and witchdoctor or witch, who act secretly practicing black or evil magic”. Mbiti (1969:200) defines witchcraft as “the use of this black power to harm or cause injury to other people. On the other hand, the medicine men deal “mainly with illness, disasters, or ill-fortune. Most of Africans believe that illness or misfortune is caused by witchcraft...the medicine men is consulted to determine the cause of the illness or misfortune, as well as the person” (Theron 1996:98). The practice and treatment of the medicine men involves psychological, religious as well as physical dimensions. “He symbolises hope for community, and can be described as the friend, pastor, doctor, and psychologist of the community” (Mbiti 1969:170-1). In Xhosa term, these shamans are divided in two, white magic and black magic.

Pauw (1994:122-125) explains this distinction in detail. White magic is used to prevent disease, disasters and dangers. The white magic Shamans are divided into two, the diviner (*iggirha*) and herbalist (*ixhwele*). Diviners are expected to provide answers to all questions or problems by means of supernatural power, normally through the instructions given by the ancestors. Ordinary diviners (*amaxukazana*) are divided into abstracters (*amagqirha aqubulaya*), who suck an object (e.g. a small stone, hair, a piece of rag, or the leg of a locust, etc) out a patient's body to interpret with the objects; interpreters (*amagqirha ambululayo*), who find out the reason where an object or portion was placed by a sorcerer with a malevolent purpose; ventriloquists (*amagqirha emilozi*), who speak with whistling voices that are regarded as those of their ancestors; and specialists (*igqirha lokumisela*), who use medicine. An ‘army’ diviner (*amatola*), nowadays an herbalist and rainmaker (*amagqirha emvula*), and special diviner (*izanuse*), who has superior

ability to the ordinary diviner, are equally categorised. Nevertheless, it can be observed that, nowadays diviners use mirrors, cards, bones and water to practise the same functions as the old ones.

Furthermore, Pauw remarks that “black magic uses medicine and some familiars. Black shamans plan to cause others grief, harm and even to kill others. They are herbalists (*ixhwele*), who make use of familiars such as, the lightning bird (*impundulu*), uthikoloshe, the snake of the woman (*inyoka yabafazi*), frogs (*amasele*), the baboon (*imfene*), the jackal-buzzard (*ingqanga*), the snake of the men (*umamlambo* or *inyoka yamadoda*), the cat (*ikati*), and a resurrected deceased (*isithunzela*)” (:128-31).

Despite important roles such as, healing and solving problems, an important role of diviners is that of the mediator between the dead ancestor and the descendants. In the empirical study in the Khayelitsha churches, especially in St. John’s and Zion churches, the role of *sangoma* is still prevalent as healer, prophet, and mediator. Specifically, they play an important role as mediator between the living dead and the descendants and many times church members expect prophecies from their living dead to guide them in the right way, and so forth.

4.3 Witness of mission Church and response of amaXhosa

4.3.1 Introduction

The research conducted in South Africa showed that some of the early Western missionaries and some of the Xhosa Christians have followed the exclusive approach, but later shifted to inclusive and pluralistic positions. Walls notes that; “the Christians interaction with the culture of the South means that Christian thought is being taken into new areas of life where Western theology has no answer” (Walls 1987:147, cit., in Bediako 2000:308). African knowledge of Christianity, shaped exclusively by the modern intellectual experience of the West, is not enough to embrace new ‘African renaissance’⁸⁰ (Bediako 2000:308). In Mugo’s ideology of African renaissance, the task of intercultural evaluation of African missiology in terms of ancestors should be to open space for all human beings, churches, and theologies. As regards shifting ideas in African arena, our concern is how the Western missionaries and mission churches encountered and responded

⁸⁰ Mugo explains that African renaissance is the discovery and renewal of not just her people and their destroyed heritages, but the space in which all human beings find themselves in celebration of fulfilled lives (1999:210).

(sometimes borrowed and accepted) ancestral issues, which constitute an important *praxis* of traditional cultures of amaXhosa. As part of our concern, we shall also attempt to answer certain provocative questions. What are the motivations behind the encounter of missionaries and mission churches? How did the specific controversies occur and how do the indigenous people respond to missionaries? Finally, is there some space for dialogue between the Western and the Southern encountering?

On the issue of Christian identity, Bevans & Schroeder (2004:33) enquire thus; “all these people over the centuries called themselves Christians, but did they really share the same faith?” This question is posed from Wall’s two-dimensional viewpoint. Walls identifies two levels, the historical connection and the constants that define its missionary nature (cf. :33). It is with these two issues, the chronological precedence of African mission regarding Xhosa ancestral matters, and the dialogical dimension in various missiological typologies, that we are primarily concerned. As Chidester (2000:423-37) also observes that there is a distinction between the “colonial era and post-colonial era [and] recognising theoretical diversities and historical specificities of these eras.” We need to follow historical patterns. If we consider the constants of mission, then Christology and salvation in diverse cultures are essential for theological continuity. We also need to observe the dialogical patterns in Xhosa mission history; how shifting ideas of missionary movement and Xhosa churches encounter and exchange their identities in terms of ancestral matters. Steven Kaplan selects six different models of adoption in Africa mission namely, toleration, translation, assimilation, Christianisation, acculturation, and incorporation (Kaplan 1995), while these are normally classified as exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism in religious dialogue. In this regard, in this section, illustrations concerning ancestral matters are given chronologically with examples of dialogical dimensions.

4.3.2 Theological views of the Western mission and mission churches on ancestor matters

During the period of colonial control (1652-1910), a great measure of missionary work had been undertaken in the extensive area of the colony. Saayman (1991:31) remarks that; “the process of colonialism was accompanied by an intense process of cultural domination. Missionaries of colonial era actively sought the introduction of superior Western cultural norms as an inherent dimension of Christianisation”. It is also on record that “before the first Moravian mission headed in, European’s stance through observation frontier travellers was that Xhosa people had “no religion, which used to indicate superstition of Xhosa religion” (Berkhfer 1978: 6-8, cit., in

Chidester 2000:428). There were disputations amongst Europeans about Xhosa beliefs, whether to regard them as religious or merely superstitious. Eventually, European attitudes changed from denial to the discovery of indigenous religions. J. C. Warner was the first Westerner to insist that the Xhosa have a religious system, which has a sort of proto-functional usage for the purpose of providing psychological security and social stability, just like colonial system (cf. Chidester 2000:429). In Kaplan's view, it was out of toleration that "missionaries agreed to accept the continued existence of certain African social or religious custom, while at the same time maintaining that they were essentially incompatible with a true Christianity for functional necessity or expediency" (Kaplan 1995:10). This was a representative attitude of the exclusivism of the missionaries of that colonial era.

In the course of their encounter with the indigenous people in the eighteenth century, Moravian missionaries established mission stations to separate the indigenous Christians from their homes, and made them to settle in the Westernised areas. Missionaries studied the indigenous people and gained a deeper knowledge of the concepts of Xhosa tradition and belief, which led them to modify many of their prejudices. Nevertheless, most missionaries stood firm on the ideas that traditional religious practices of the indigenous people were not reconcilable with Christianity, so people who came into conflict with mission stations had to leave. Such actions on the part of the missionaries caused much tension between missionaries and the indigenous folks and between local evangelists and certain white missionaries such that their lives were endangered (cf. Elbourne & Ross 1997:35; Mills 1995:153).

The first missionary for amaXhosa, van der Kemp taught Jesus as *Sifuba-sibanzi*, which means the saviour of the world. Apart from *Sifuba-sibanzi* (broad breasted one), a figure taken from Xhosa folklore, *Gxalab' elibanzi* (broad-shouldered one) was also later introduced to Xhosa. Van der Kemp's exclusivistic interpretation of Christ for the Xhosa people was *Gxalab' elibanzi* (broad-shouldered one), the images of which he derived from the teaching that Christ carries the sins of the world. His concern for Xhosa was to improve the morality of the Xhosa and change their traditional religious life style because he saw that their life style was sinful (cf. Lungu 1982:50). Moreover, Mqhayi (1974:19) witnesses van der Kemp's response to missionary teaching as "forsaking superstitions and traditions, forsaking customs and ancestral spirits, forsaking mischief and celebration parties".

We have already noted that van der Kemp formulated the interpretation, *Sifuba-sibanzi* on the

basis of an exclusivistic view. In Xhosa folklore, *Sifuba-sibanzi* was the prince who married Mbulukazi. Lungu is uncertain why van der Kemp would interpret Christ with this terminology because *Sifuba-sibanzi* had shown weakness of character by succumbing to pressure to marry Mbulukazi's half-sister who he did not want. Lungu also argues that; "in this interpretation Christ cannot be linked with the Divine Trinity" (Lungu 1982:49-50). In Ntsikana's Great Hymn, Hodgson introduces van der Kemp's interpretation;

*There was God in heaven
He created all things
The sun, the moon, the stars
There was one Sifuba-sibanzi (broad breasted one)
He is the leader of men
Was heralded by a star
His feet were wounded for us
His hands were pierced for us (Hodgson 1980:38).*

Regrettably, van der Kemp's functional interpretation after all distorted the image of Christ and could not project a complete picture of the Trinity to the Xhosa religious culture. His interpretation was based on not only a shallow understanding of Xhosa linguistic, but also the deep meanings of the terminologies of its religious culture.

According to Hodgson (1980:38), Mina affirms van der Kemp's teaching on salvation and the Xhosa understanding of the status of the dead ancestor in the following passage:

He (*Sifuba-sibanzi*) sent the missionary to tell Gaika (chief Ngqika) that he will come again, and all who practice witchcraft will be swept away as before a mighty wind... We know something about death and we know that our ancestors are living somewhere, but we could not tell where. Nyengang (van der Kemp) has come to tell us that the good people go to God after death, and the bad ones go to the place of *izitunzela* (dead people who died after they had been bewitched, then the witches raise them and enslave them after they had cut their tongues and driven nails into their heads) where there is a big fire kindled and they are burned there as we burn the *Amagqwirha* (witches).

In Kaplan's view, his method in missional dialogue with Xhosa was a translation, which can be understood as "I am not exclusively concerned with the process of rendering Christian literature in African languages, but rather with the more general attempt to express Christian ideas and

concepts in African idioms” (Kaplan 1995:13). As we noted, this is a typical example of colonial-oriented missiological dialogue method. Lungu (1982:50) also comments that; “while Van der Kemp’s preaching was interested in improving the morals of the Xhosa, for him, their whole social life was seen as sinful”. Additionally, “even if he never tried to alienate them from their culture or to replace it with Eastern value and consciousness, but he also condemned their barbarous customs” (van der Kemp 421-2, cit., in Hodgson 1997:70). It has also been noted that; “his successor Joseph Williams, who found the first permanent Xhosa mission, also was uncompromised in his condemnation of ancestor worship and related rituals” (Hodgson 1997:74).

According to Hodgson, there were also accommodating approaches. For example, the first missionary to Xhosa people condemned their customs as ‘barbarous’ but he never tried to alienate them from their culture or to replace it with European values and consciousness (:70). Again, not all missionaries adopted this exclusivistic position. For instance, some argued that circumcision is not immoral nor is it in any way un-Christian.⁸¹ In Kaplan’s words, “this is a Christianisation, which is that missionaries sought to create Christian versions of traditional African rites and practices” (Kaplan 1995:16).

From the observations above, we can conclude that the attitude of missionaries in the nineteenth century toward the traditional religious customs of the indigenous was also exclusive. Mills (1995:153) affirms this point stating that; “a number of traditional Xhosa social customs were opposed by missionaries who tried to insist that their Xhosa converts abstain from all observance or participation, on pain of discipline, even expulsion from the Church”. In particular, as F. Max Muller inaugurated his method of colonialism and imperialism in 1870, it permeated the understanding of the academic study of religion. His comparative method is a Euro-centred understanding of religion, which considers African religions as more inferior on the evolutionary grade of religious culture. His religio-cultural evolutionism dominated the colonial era supporting exclusivistic stance.

In post-colonial era, distinctive theological interpretations and actions continued to play an

⁸¹ Cf. Bishop Callaway (Anglican), Native Laws, Minutes of evidence, appen. C, p. 71. Also Reve Chalmers (Presbyterian), Native Laws, Minutes of evidence, appen. C, p. 137, no. 2395 recited by Bredekamp & Ross 1995:169. The circumcision initiated the young men into full membership in the family, which included not only the living but also its guiding spirits – the ancestors who would never accept uncircumcised men. So this circumcision could be understood originally in *ubuntu* and as religious tone in Xhosa tradition.

important role in the churches' understanding of African culture and ancestor practice. The early mission churches in South Africa saw ancestor practice as religious and exclusively and strictly forbade it. For example, J.H Soga of the Miller mission in 1931 evaluated "Xhosa belief as superstition" (Soga 1932:154) and even 'animistic' (:150):

The character of the X(h)osa religion... is often declared to be animistic. The animistic character ascribed to be due undoubtedly to the fact that worship is never offered to the Supreme Being directly, but through the medium of the ancestral spirits. Nevertheless, there is ever present to the mind of X(h)osa, one beyond them who is supreme. Just as, we say it in all reverence, God is worshipped through the intermediary, Jesus Christ, so the X(h)osa worships the Supreme Being, *T(h)ixo*, through the medium of the ancestral spirits (:150).

The mission policy of the Dutch Reformed Church does not differ from that of the Miller mission during this era. A. A. Loux was convinced that there was need for a radical break with traditional customs and religious practices, and he understood the word 'indigenous' as effective preaching in the local language and the training of indigenous church leaders. For him, traditional customs had to be renounced (cf. Daneel 1973:57). Furthermore, it is on record that the rise of Afrikaner nationalism and the strengthening of Pietism in the Dutch Reformed Church in the early part of the twentieth century enhanced cultural segregation (Naude 2003:194-5).

Nevertheless, the mood began to change gradually in some denominations, especially as the Catholic and Anglican Churches tried to justify traditional practices and modify them in Christianity.⁸² In 1956, "the Article 201 of the law and regulation fixed that a member who worships ancestor is subject to discipline. And ancestor worship was viewed as worship" (Theron 1996:37).⁸³ Thus, even if some mission workers applied themselves to a Christian confrontation with the traditional world of spirits, the general tendency of the Dutch Reform Church (DRC) was "rather one of elimination and a measure of negation of the world of spirits instead of one of confrontation and dialogue with (ancestral belief)" (:58). Daneel (1973:266) is also of the view that; "the belief in the ancestor is considered as a transgression of the first commandment and therefore condemned". As Naude establishes, the "DRC is consequently no longer one church that has theological coherence. There is much stronger diversity of theological thought ranging from orthodox reformed to liberalist forms of modernists and postmodernists"

⁸² Whilst Protestant churches emphasise the total corruption (*corruptio totalis*) of human nature, Roman Catholic propagate a natural theology. These different theologies breed completely different approaches as regard adoption or rejection of ancestral customs (Daneel 1987:92).

⁸³ Dr. Pieter Theron teaches at the Justo Mwale Theological College in Lusaka, Zambia.

(Naude 2003:195).

Similarly, Theron (1996:38, 39) observes that; ‘the Lutheran church believes that saints in heaven can intercede for the church... The saints are only seen as good example of faith. Methodist stance is that the belief in the ancestors cannot be reconciled with the Christian faith’. Theron agrees that viewpoints in the Protestant churches concerning ancestor matters vary from strict opposition, to neutrality, to accommodation. He records that; “in case of *ukwaluka*, the boy’s circumcision, missionary opposition was gradually attenuated. Generally, the mood of 19th century for this ritual was strict. Boys who went through this rite were expelled from school and disciplined in the church. But mission churches and missionaries had to compromise it” (Bredekamp & Ross 1995:165).⁸⁴

In this regard, some other people such as, Mosothoane of the Anglican Church, have a more positive attitude toward ancestor worship. They considered ancestor matter in the *communio sanctorum* even including the dead as a member of the body of the Christ. Mosothoane considers “...the Eucharist as the place where the ancestor cult should be incorporated. The Eucharist is not only the fellowship with Christ, but with all Christians, living and dead. African Christians should be encountered to communicate with ancestors within the context of the Eucharist” (Mosothoane 1973:86-95). He even argues that slaughtering animals for sacrifice could be Christianised. He regards this ritual not as worship to ancestors but a symbol of fellowship with them. It is sign of respect and remembrance.

It is also important to state that there were other examples of indigenisation by workers in some main line mission churches. Although there were few unofficial efforts to adopt ancestor worship, the official attitude of these churches remained negative or that of outright rejection. More “recently, these churches went silent on this issue” (Theron 1996:40). Thus, “missionaries and mission churches many times interpret ancestor matters according to their own experiences and theological stances” (Thom 1973:74). As we observe diverse attitudes in post-colonial era to the study religion, Chidester (2000:432-3) also identifies “two extreme positions of academic studies of religion, indignity and hybridity”. It should be noted that Kaplan’s terms, acculturation and incorporation are more related to indignity and hybridity, which are more positive to other religious traditions. According to Kaplan (1995:19-21):

⁸⁴ Missional churches and missionaries were blamed for their campaign by Xhosa people; “the only result of the missionary campaign was to promote deception, breaches of discipline, disobedience of children, and hypocrisy (165).”

Acculturation is attempts by missionaries to preserve features of traditional culture, which they felt to be valuable and compatible with the development of Christian spirituality, while incorporation carries Africanisation of Christianity beyond mere adoption, for it entails the introduction of Africa concept into the body of normative Christianity.

Consequently, these exclusivistic and inclusive approaches of missionaries and mission churches, in dialogue with Xhosa ancestral religious cultural tradition remain on-going processes in South Africa.

To understand the mood of foreign missionaries working around Khayelitsha, an interview was recently conducted with Mike Boone.⁸⁵ His response is as follows:

I personally do not think that ancestors have any influence in the lives of their descendants. This is a view that my sending agency indorses and which we as International Mission Board missionaries teach. I believe that Jesus as described by Paul in the book of Timothy is the only mediator between God and man. I also believe that a person has a free-will to choose or reject Jesus as Lord and Savior. This person stands condemned due to their unbelief (John 3:17-8). Because of Christ's death on the cross he has earned the right as the only Savior and Mediator. I believe that our forefathers have left us a legacy to follow, especially if they were believers in Jesus as Savior. We can follow their legacy and honor their memory of their contributions to the kingdom of God. The Baptist church does not indorse or encourage the veneration of ancestors. For the modern Christian, in the Xhosa context, they battle with the overwhelming idea of fear. They feel like they must appease the ancestors by performing certain rituals and ceremonies. All of these tend to border on the idea of worship, though the average Xhosa will deny that they worship but simply honor their ancestors. The ceremonies and rituals are not indigenised or reinterpreted in the Baptist church.

From the above, it is clear that Boone's stance as a Baptist missionary is strictly opposed to Xhosa ancestor worship, stating unequivocally that this is also the official stance of the International Mission Board missionaries. Consequently, his stance to ancestor worship among Xhosa Christianity can be regarded as exclusivistic, or type A in Bevans and Schroeder's

⁸⁵ Boone is an American missionary lecturing at the Baptist Seminary in Cape Town. He has been working among Xhosa people for many years. This interview was conducted in April of 2007 at the Baptist Seminary by the researcher.

category.⁸⁶ In this regard, any ancestral worship, its related rituals, and indigenised forms are exclusively not accepted to Boone. Equally, Xhosa ancestor matters, whether considered as cultural or religious, cannot be re-interpreted in the Baptist Church. According to him, there is no possibility of opening mutual space to dialogue and because he considers ancestor worship of Xhosa Christians as merely religious, he cannot consider it as a counterpart of communication.

As we noted in 2.3.2.3, under the culture vs. culture mode, we established that all religions are also revealed and encountered in cultural form. If we consider religion as confrontational in relation to culture, then, naturally we have exclusivistic or functional attitude toward the target traditional religious culture. In Boone's case, he even refuses to re-interpret the target tradition, which is ancestor worship, thereby, actually denying even a functional approach to the target tradition. This mission stance can only be explained as a neo-colonial view.

Again, Boone recognises ancestor worship as a superstition that results from people's fear of unseen beings, the supernatural world, and diviners, including ancestors. As Lungu (1982:105) declares, the "Christian gospel liberates Xhosa people from this fear". In his own theology, which is imported from the West, he believes that this superstition can be transformed by the sound gospel. This attitude is actually based on a cultural evolutionary stance.

Furthermore, Boone's view of mediatorship is that Jesus is the only mediator. Even if the living can respect and follow the legacy of the ancestors if they were Christians on earth, they cannot be mediators after death. Boone assumes that the reason why Xhosa Christians still worship their ancestor is merely for fear of them. He considers that average Xhosa Christians in Khayelitsha deny ancestor worship, and that they merely honour them.

In a similar development, when American missionary, Hulbert arrived in Korea and observed the issue of ancestor worship in 1880, he concluded that *Chosén* people were immersed in myths and legends, and that the *Chosén* society could be compared with the Middle age of the West. He noted that the problem of *Chosén* can be attributed to a low educational level among the people. His view also could be considered as that based on cultural imperialism or a cultural evolutionary stance. It is worth noting that Boone's view of ancestor worship among Xhosa Christians is not much different from Hulbert's.

⁸⁶ The typologie is discussed and applied in 5.2.1.

Without any doubt, Boone's missiological identity is revealed in his Christology, as he declares that; "because of Christ's death on the cross he has earned the right as the only saviour and mediator." This type of Christology is conceived as that, which is accomplished after death and is out of this world (Bevans & Schroeder 2004:44). Thus, it is difficult to approach this matter in a holistic way, which is the '*praxis* of with.'

This exclusivistic stance of Boone is based on the assumption of discontinuity between the dead and the living. They cannot communicate to each other anymore, and of course, ancestors cannot intervene in the affairs of their descendants. They can merely be remembered by their descendants by virtue of their legacy as Christians. This concept of memory of ancestors is completely different from the African concept of *memoria*. As Bujo shows, "this *memoria* is realised within an all embracing fellowship" (Bujo 2001:56); the African concept of *memoria* should be understood in the context of *ubuntu*.

In another interview with a Brazilian missionary in Khayelitsha, Angela Pegoraro de Souza, she also expresses a similar stance on Xhosa ancestor worship.⁸⁷

The biggest problem is to accept them as mediators between us and God because they are not. Among the Xhosa, the Christians believe in ancestors and in Christ; in other words, both are mediators between them and God. They do not worship them and also they believe that there is no communication between them and the dead people. Only Jesus Christ is the mediator who brings salvation. In our culture, the majority of Christians (Catholics) believe in saints as mediators. One of the reasons that it continues is fear of the ancestors and other their family traditions. They want to be blessed in their lives (have success, good health etc.). However, there are some aspects that we can preserve or accept in their culture like the respect they show to their ancestors.

It appears that even if missionaries from overseas and mission churches involved in Xhosa churches have divergent standpoints on account of their missiological orientation, they primarily show more exclusivistic attitude toward Xhosa's ancestor worship. As a Brazilian missionary, de Souza compares this matter with the ancestral issues in her own country, specifically, the strong traditional belief in Saints and communion with them. She is able to understand the background of Xhosa ancestor worship when it is compared with familiar situation in her own country,

⁸⁷ Angela Pegoraro de Souza is a Brazilian and Free Methodist Church missionary who has been working in Khayelitsha for a few years. She is involved with African Leadership, an international mission organisation in Khayelitsha. This interview was conducted in May of 2007 at Khayelitsha

Brazil.

However, the biggest problem for her in encountering with ancestor worship of Xhosa Christians concerns salvation. She understands that ancestor mediatorship is related to salvation. Xhosa Christians believe that their salvation comes from Jesus and their ancestors; both work together for their salvation. In the empirical research conducted, majority of Xhosa Christians expect their ancestors as mediators, to meet their life-oriented needs, but only few Xhosa Christians also believe that ancestor can influence their salvation; these ask their ancestors for their salvation.

In the same way, de Souza has witnessed cases of Brazilian Roman Catholics who ask their Saints not merely for daily needs, but for spiritual deliverance. In Brazil, Roman Catholic belief in the communion of Saints and the theory of purgatory is widespread. She recognises that Xhosa Christians also have the same pattern of ideas on salvation when they consider both their ancestors and Jesus as mediators. She could not accept mediatorship in this regard especially, because she believes that there is no communication between the dead and the living. Additionally, she evaluates and interprets Xhosa ancestor worship in line with her own religious and theological background. Again, the stance is exclusivistic.

In de Souza's view, the reason adduced to ancestor worship is fear of the ancestors and the strong traditions behind its meanings, such as life-oriented assistance and guidance. However, the strongest reason is fear as shown by the empirical surveys conducted in Khayelitsha by this researcher, in St. John's church and other independent churches. Hence, we can state that de Souza rightly pinpoints the reason. She also refers to family tradition or family tie as another reason indicating that she has correctly interpreted the social structure of Xhosa society in Khayelitsha. In this connection, Wanamaker (1997:286-8) affirms that; "ancestors are not only mediators in religious cultural matter, but also guardians of the social moral order, especially of public morality". In spite of the dwindling influence of the social function of ancestors, they still have important roles in the post-apartheid era. As the West notes, "the ancestor cult is not simply about social order with its concerns for power and property; it also concerns broader issues of morality and the underlying beliefs of those who engaged in the ancestor cult" (West 1975:188). Moreover, "ancestors require filial duty and an unquestioning respect for tribal law and custom" (Eiselen & Schapera 1937:270, cit., in Wanamaker 1997:288).

Whereas de Souza upholds an exclusivistic ideology about Xhosa ancestor worship, she leaves

room for a nuance of hope for opening communication space with Xhosa ancestor worship. As she notes, “there are some aspects that we can preserve or accept in their culture like the respect they show to their ancestors”. This shows that she approaches this matter from the perspective of meaning. If we stress the importance of meaning, then all meanings that can be constructed from Xhosa ancestor worship in Khayelitsha usher us into a holistic approach. From the empirical study, the meanings of ancestor worship to Xhosa Christians in Khayelitsha seem to point toward life-oriented needs such as, protection, health, blessing, right guidance in making decisions, job, family-ties etc. As we stated in 2.2.3, the holistic approach is a theological method from applying the efficiency and meaning of salvation toward culture, while *perichoresis* is the theological hermeneutics of holistic approach (cf. 2.2.2). At this point, it may be important to investigate how Xhosa Christians, especially the theologians, have interacted with these shifting and diverse missiological stances over ancestor worship.

4.3.3 Responses of Xhosa Christians to ancestor matters

Our aim in this section is to reconstruct how the Xhosa Christians interpret their own ancestor worship in view of the gospel. We shall be addressing several questions. What were the responses of the indigenous people to the Western missionaries’ view of Xhosa’s traditional ancestor culture? What were their attitudes in terms of relating traditional ancestor worship to Christianity? Obviously, the answers to these questions are somehow interwoven with socio-political factors such as, early frontier wars between Xhosa and White or the Apartheid policy. It should be stated that this section is concerned with ancestral issues only within the limits of religion and culture and will only minimally address these socio-political factors.

In the 1810’s, there are distinctive responses from Xhosa who neither remained rooted in ancestor ritual, nor acquired the missionaries’ scheme of total cultural reconstruction. Nxele, who was a religious visionary and war leader, recognised also as the first Xhosa prophet, developed a new message grounded in the Xhosa worldview of ancestor. Although he seemed to have accepted the Christian doctrines by van der Kemp,⁸⁸ on the other hand “he retained elements of an African traditional religion” (Tisani 1987:167). He depicted “the world as a battleground between the God of the white, *Thixo*, and the God of the black, (*Mdalidephu*)” (Hodgson 1997:72; Peires 1982:71). He also insisted that; “white people will be punished for murdering Jesus. Nxele, as the younger brother of *Tayi* (Jesus) has been sent from the mystical

⁸⁸ According to Peires, his attitude before the war (1817) was as brothers in a common pursuit (Peires 1982: 69-70).

source of origin (*Mdalidephu*)⁸⁹ to destroy white people and to bring them back to their ancestors” (Kropf 1915:499, cit., in Hodgson 1997:72). “Nxele then proclaimed that *Thixo*, the god of the white people, had punished white people for killing his son by casting them into the sea, and *mdalidiphu*, the god of the deeps, who dwelled under the ground but had ultimate dominion over the sea” (Peires 1982:70). ‘This indigenised interpretation of Nxele that identified two gods came from the chief Ngqika’s observation, which claims that since the Europeans were people of the sea – the natives of the water – they had no business on the land and should have stayed in the sea’ (Campbell 1815:526, cit., in Chidester 2000:426). Furthermore:

Missionary believed that Nxele’s teaching of the corporeal resurrection of the dead was appropriated from Christianity, but Nxele legitimated it by replacing it within the Xhosa creation myth. He taught that the ancestors would rise from the grave but follow the same route the first African people had taken from below, a resurrection to be effected by a ritual sacrifice of cattle (Hodgson 1997:72).

It seems his attitude against the ‘white Christianity’ deepened. It was a syncretised interpretation of Christianity in Xhosa version regarding traditional ancestral culture. These hostile religious-cultural reactions of Xhosa to Christianity were crucially related to Xhosa wars against the Whites at that time.⁹⁰ However, we need to understand that Xhosa’s view of cultural and religious symbols is not a single and homogeneous entity. On the contrary, “African culture allows for a variety of expressions, sometimes among the people of the same community” (Tisani 1987:203).

In this regard, we may observe diverse attitudes of the Xhosa in their encounter with Western Christianity. For instance, Ntsikana, who was Nxele’s contemporary, became very popular among Western scholars because he did not emphasise his traditional religions (Tisani 1987:191). Therefore, when Christianity was introduced among the Xhosa, the opposing views of Ntsikana and Nxele created confusion. Ntsikana’s circles met any reference to ancestors and traditional customs with opposition; for them to become a Christian means to leave one’s old tradition. On the other hand, within Nxele’s circle, African customs were re-interpreted and practised in new ways in spite of a hostile disposition of the church regarding these customs and traditions. Again, Tisani reminds us that; “what is important for us is that the difference in religious expressions among amaXhosa would have accounted for dynamism in the life of those

⁸⁹ Nxele prefers to call God *Mdalidephu* instead of *Thixo*, which van der Kemp taught them.

⁹⁰ A series of wars between Xhosa and the Whites began with the first Frontier war in 1779 and ended with the British annexation of British Kaffraria in 1847.

people” (:205).

By the turn of that century, education was used a strategic tool to focus on the elite. Some of the Xhosa elites were trained by mission schools. Among them, “the first Xhosa Methodist minister, Charles Pamla (1834-1917) experienced much resistance for his preaching against traditional ancestor related rituals, circumcision, beer drinking, dancing and *lobola* in Etembeni” (Roy 2002: 97-9). Roy enquires, “Was Pamla influenced by white missionaries in these issues and their insensitivity to black culture?” (:98) As subordinate agents, Xhosa clergy faced a very painful dilemma when Xhosa Christians were unwilling to abandon traditional customs including circumcision, traditional healing and ancestor worship. Needless to say, even some “African clergymen were still part of a traditional world of Xhosa society and culture” (Mills 1995:162).

Many indigenous people moved to the mission station for various reasons and encountered the European Christian world; even so, some of those who were already baptised, could not completely break off from their socio-religious customs. As Mills perfectly concludes:

By the beginning of the twentieth century, only the campaign against drinking of Xhosa beer (*utywala*) had been an unqualified success in that abstention was accepted in practice as a requirement for membership in good standing in almost all mission churches. But the success for other customs was much more qualified (Roy 2002:153).

Without any doubt, missionaries were confronted with a stone wall and they had to sometimes compromise in respect of ancestral issues. Hodgson asserts that “from the 1860s to 1910, the high imperial era in South Africa, the Black people began a concerted attempt to liberate their indigenous symbols from an alienated past and to integrate them with an African understanding of Christianity” (Hodgson 1997:68, 82). Because of the revival of the movement for traditional customs, the African Independent Churches (AIC) have multiplied. Martin argues that the African Independent (Initiated) Churches are the evidence of the first major form of Christian resistance to the policies that laid the foundations of Apartheid. Sipuka has proved that the legacy of Apartheid continues to affect the practice of sacrifice within the new independent South Africa. Nevertheless, “not only Apartheid is the reason of revival of traditionalism among Black Africans, but also rigid attitude of the Western missionaries and mission churches about traditional customs like ancestor worship” (1990:84-99). Roy maintains that one of the reasons so many blacks separate from white instituted churches is the “prevalent attitude of paternalism

and lack of a positive appreciation of African culture among missionaries...In 1997, independent churches have grown having about ten million adherents with 6,000 churches” (Roy 2002:105).

According to the survey of Pauw,⁹¹ “91% of rural church members and 89% of urban church members believed in the power of the ancestors to affect their lives. 81% (sic) of rural and 78% of urban Christian people responded that they experienced the ancestor’s intervention in their lives” (Pauw 1975:141, 206). He further explains that most of these people believe in Christianity whilst they are still influenced by their old ancestral tradition:

A rural Methodist woman claimed not to attach special significant to the observance of mourning customs, commenting that ‘we nowadays work with God; we do not work with our ancestors.’ On the other hand, she expected misfortune to result from disregarding the dream of the dead father, and seemed to regard it as an actual visitation (:206).

Currently, most indigenous African agencies continue to interpret Christianity from the perspective of their own traditions. The symbolic meaning of ancestral matters is an on-going process, which gives Xhosa Christians some sense of security. There is no gainsaying that ancestor belief in Africa presents a serious task to post-modern theologians. For instance, Bediako remarks concerning the post-missionary era that; African indigenous agencies, as ‘vanguards of African culture’⁹² must “inquire into their understanding of the significance of the gospel for the interpretation of African realities, like ancestors, and for the meaning of African Christian identity” (Bediako 1999:252). In this regard, Idowu is the forerunner to prepare the post-missionary era of African churches in terms of African traditional religious culture. He questions the importance of the indigenous beliefs and customs of Africa and the “ability of a westernised African Christianity which does not seriously integrate the African religious past, to truly appropriate the gospel in African term” (1973:270). This is particularly relevant with respect to the question of ancestor worship in the strict sense; and in this regard, Kuckertz (1981:82-8) categorises “ancestor religion in African theology, in systemic theology and in the context of action”.

In the systemic discourse, Kuckertz addresses two central issues; is God an ancestor or God, and is the community with the ancestor part of an African ecclesiology? Leading theologians such as Sawyerr (1964, 1966, and 1970) consider the relation between God and the ancestor. He refers to

⁹¹ The research for his book, *Christianity and Xhosa Tradition* covered the period of 1960-66 (Pauw 1975:5-6).

⁹² See Mijoga (2002:183-205), for use of this expression.

‘God as Great ancestor’ (Sawyer 1970:105).

The African attitude to God is a reflection of his relationship with his chiefs, influenced in certain respects by his to ancestral spirits. The fact of God’s existence is never questioned. First, He is thought to be the creator of the world and of man. He is therefore the oldest imaginable Being. Like grandfather, then, He must be the one person who feels a concern for his children. He is accordingly man’s ancestor (:8).

Fasgolé–Luke (1974) approaches the matter from a different angle, by adopting the Catholic’s concept of Saint. In this regard also, Mbiti makes a “distinction between Christianity and the gospel. Christianity, which results from the encounter of the gospel with any given local or regional community/society, is always indigenous; on the other hand, the gospel is God-given, eternal and does not change” (Mbiti 1979:305). Mbiti, who focuses on corporate eschatology, considers that Christianity or theologies are always indigenous. His method aims to liberate the gospel in the African context and to see African traditional religions as a preparation for the gospel (*praeparatio evangelica*). He claims that the “gospel enabled people to utter the name Jesus Christ... that the final and completing element that crowns their traditional religiosity and brings its flickering light to full brilliance” (:68). It appears that his missiological stance adheres more toward the inclusive approach. In particular, he explains traditional ancestral matters encountering with the gospel from a philosophical view of the African’s concept of time, which is *Sasa* and *Zamani*.

Christocentric approaches, (cf. Pobee 1979; and Bediako 1993), are the most important concern in African theology today. Based on a holistic approach to salvation in African philosophy, Bediako claims that; “salvation in the traditional African world involves a certain view of the realm of a spiritual-power and its effects upon the physical and spiritual dimensions of human existence” (Bediako 1993:57). On his part, Pobee (1973:67) suggests that we need to look on Jesus as the Great and the Great ancestor. Goba’s ideology of a particular concept of time characterised by a present-past is understood within the context of *ubuntu*. He argues that; “corporate personality extends vertically to include the departed and those yet to be born”. Thus, his concept of time is the social reality of kinship. Ela (1977:34-49) also draws the theological conclusion from the social anthropological proposition of ancestor cult being a social rather than a religious phenomenon that is centred in the family. The family embraces the living and the dead.

Alternatively, some other scholars speak of ancestor matters in the context of action. They attempt to find a way of treating the ethics of African people through traditional religious thought. In Wanamaker's view, African traditional religious thought emphasises one of the most crucial roles performed by ancestors as "guardians of social and moral order" (1976:146) through ancestral system of the societies. Before him, Fortes had also argued that ancestors symbolise the continuity of the social structure (cf. Fortes 1976).

There is no doubt that the perspectives of churches and theologians are sharply divided on the whole idea of worship (cf. Berglund, cit., in Hammond-Tooke 1978:134-49); or the token of fellowship and acts of family relationship (Mbiti 1969: 8-9) or reminding them of duties of descendants (Krige, cit., in Hammond-Tooke 1978:134-49) or elders who have died (West 1975:188-9), and the idea of worship (Hammond-Tooke 1978:134-49). Kuckertz (1981:87) surmises that; "it is already outdated to distinguish worship or veneration of ancestors in the missiological arena".

On this note, the question to ask is whether there remains any value in recalling the various disputations over ancestors in the modern or post-modern era. Where we are going from here concerning this matter? Our greatest problem today is not that we do not know enough, or that we are ignorant in this matter; "it is about the meaning of all our expert knowledge" (van der Walt 2003:544). For us, the more important concern is what the ancestors mean for Xhosa Christians living in the post-Apartheid era in Khayelitsha.

4.4 Empirical research on amaXhosa in Khayelitsha

4.4.1 Introduction and demography of Khayelitsha

According to a 2003 Christianity survey of Khayelitsha by the URDR⁹³ of the University of Stellenbosch, there are a total of 274 places of Christian worship each holding an average of 1201 people (the total population of 329,002 is based on 2001 government census out of which 96.8% is amaXhosa). Of this total, 76.7% indicated Christianity as their religious affirmation in Khayelitsha in 2001, while 20.4% claimed they had no religion; 0.2% practised Islam, and 0.1% practised Hinduism⁹⁴. As we noted, the estimated population of this area in 2006 is about

⁹³ Unit for Religion and Development Research of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Stellenbosch.

⁹⁴ See 2001 South African Census.

500,000. That same year, the estimated Christian population is about 384,000 in Khayelitsha according to government statistics. However, according to the African Leadership survey,⁹⁵ Christian churches in this area are about 441 in 2007 although the number could be as high as 500 including 60 churches, which chose not to respond to the research. The number of the congregation in most of these churches ranges from 20 to 40 people except in a few large churches.⁹⁶ It indicates that the entire Christian population attending church regularly among over 18 years old congregation is around 15,000 of the 500,000 population.

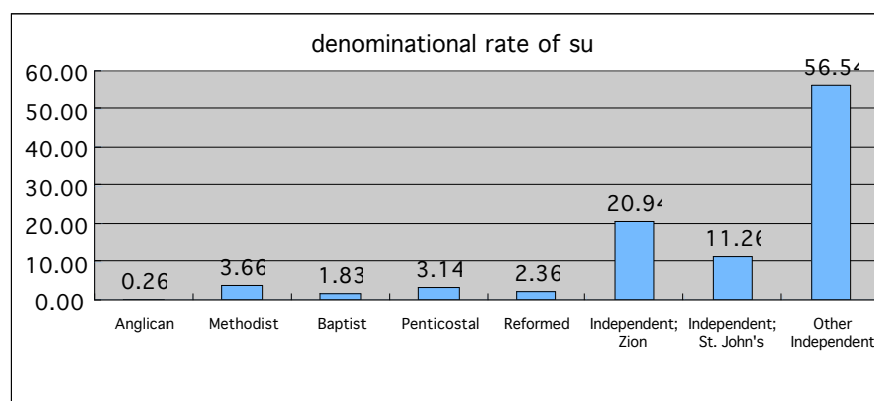


fig. 3 Survey of denominational rate (%)

From fig. 3, it can be noted that a distinctive feature is that 88.74% of Khayelitsha churches are categorised as African Independent Churches, while only 11.26% of the churches are main-line churches. According to South African 2001 census, only 53% of Khayelitsha Christians belong to African Independent Churches. If we consider this statistics in the light of this current survey, it can be shown that in all the main-line churches (except the Congregational church), there has been a decline from 1996 to 2001, while most African Independent Church groups had grown remarkably within this period⁹⁷. Out of the number of the African Independent Churches in Khayelitsha, the Zion churches and the St. John's churches have remarkable growth; each of them respectively constitutes 20.94% and 11.28% of the entire church population. The case of St. John's church is particularly notable, as it was not even listed as a category in the 2001 government census.

⁹⁵ This research was held in 2006-7 for four months using door-to-door church interview method in the entire Khayelitsha area (See Khayelitsha Church Directory of 2007; an unpublished book). Approximately 60 churches did not respond to open and share information of their churches. These churches are not included in this research and the calculations.

⁹⁶ Kiernan's comment on the sizes of Zion churches in South Africa is that, normally the membership varies "from 7-40, not counting children. Only few churches succeed in developing beyond this scale (Kiernan 1995: 124)." Other denominations also have similar scales of congregations.

⁹⁷ See 2003 URDR survey (p.45)

Kiernan gives two reasons for the rapid growth of the Zion churches in urban areas. First, from a social dimension, these churches provide answers to the problems of urban migrants. They offer intimate and supportive homogeneous communities. The second dimension is spiritual as they cater for spiritually related needs such as, healing or deliverance. He explains that; “these churches concentrated and mobilised spiritual reserves to counter the aggression of evil sorcery” (Kiernan 1995:124). In the same way, Linda Elaine Thomas also regards healing as a crucial need among poor Xhosa people in the urban area of Cape Town suburb. She observes that “intimate kinship and social tie” make it possible for St. John’s churches to have a good health care system (Thomas 1999:93-105). St. John’s churches in Khayelitsha organise services more than three times daily; and the services normally focus on healing using pure water.

From their physical appearance, the churches in Khayelitsha can be divided into three types namely, the house-churches, the school-churches, and the churches, which have own building. However, majority of these churches are house churches. There are also some other distinguishing features. For instance, St. John’s churches are distinguished for their ceremonial clothes of white and blue colours. Most house-churches do not have any indicators outside, such as the emblem of the Cross commonly seen outside the Western Churches; only the sound of drumming serves as a sign that a church is present in the neighbourhood. As Niangoran-Bouah explains, “this drum for Xhosa traditional culture is a means of communication, and also a means of mediation with the sacred. Sometimes [the] drum is considered as animated being and can speak, as a living being. The drummed message is produced by striking the membrane with the sticks” (Niangoran-Bouah 1991:82-6).

We need to also note that the majority of church leaders (commonly referred to as bishops, arch-bishops, reverends, pastors, or ministers), seldom have a chance to learn theology at regular institutes. The situation even becomes more complex as the leadership of a few of the churches, especially in St. John’s, Zion and some other independent churches, introduce themselves as *sangoma*. In some other instances, some of their members are practising *sangomas*. They normally identify themselves with Xhosa beads on the wrist, the ankle or the neck. The subject of ancestors in connection with their traditional culture and its indigenous interpretation is still a hot cake in Xhosa churches.

In the light of the afore-mentioned, this research might be understood from three premises.

Firstly, it is a research based on the proportion of the number of churches involved in each denomination, and is not necessarily based on the numerical size of the churches. Secondly, the purpose of the evaluations in the second phase (that is, denominational, generational evaluation and evaluation of influencing power of missionaries and mission churches), is to identify the trends in the responses of the participants to questions about ancestor matters. Thirdly, the target of this empirical survey is comprised only of lay members and not church leaders.

4.4.2 Evaluation of statistics

In order to classify the information on the views of Xhosa Christians towards ancestor worship, we shall adopt the “content-related category system” (Wiele 2004:25)⁹⁸ based on above-mentioned ancestral related facts. The questionnaire (Type A) is divided into four parts, namely, the general ideas of ancestors and Supreme Being; questions related to the church; questions about the ideology of salvation and culture; and finally indigenisation-related questions.

4.4.2.1 General ideas of ancestor matter

This section is a survey on the general ideology of ancestors and the Supreme Being. In the first question⁹⁹ (1-1), ‘do you recognise *Thixo* as the Supreme Being?’, 91.36% of the respondents recognise *Thixo* as the Supreme Being. Additionally, a few people also recognise *uSomandla*, *uNndikhoyo*, *uYehova* and *uQamata* as the Supreme Being.

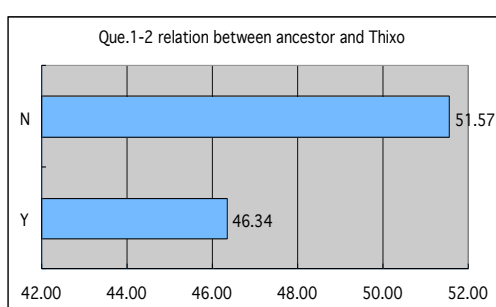


fig. 4 Que.1-2 (%)

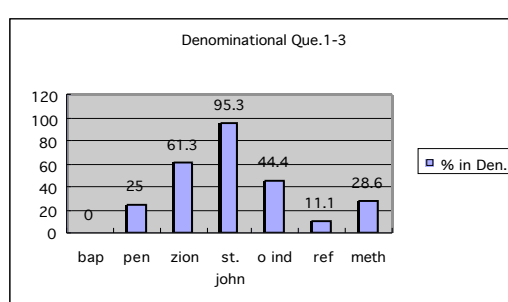


fig. 5 Denominational Que. 1-3 ¹⁰⁰

Question 1-2, *What is the relation between ancestor and Thixo; are they the same being?* The

⁹⁸ Its construction is based on the principles of structuring emerging from the literature studies about Xhosa and the results of survey.

⁹⁹ For a list of the questions in both English and Xhosa, see questionnaire sample in Appendix 2 below.

¹⁰⁰ N and Y in figs. 20 and 21 refer to ‘No’ and ‘Yes’, respectively.

data shows that 46.94 % of the people responded in the affirmative indicating that these people believe that there is a form of uniformity between *Thixo* and the ancestors.

Questions 1-3, Do you believe that your ancestors are still alive in a certain state?" More than half of the respondents, 51.05% respond positively to this question. This indicates that about half of Xhosa Christians do not clearly distinguish the divine status of the Supreme Being from their ancestors, even if they recognise qualitative difference between them. As can be noted in the graph from the denominational Question 3-1,¹⁰¹ those who could not clearly distinguish this are mostly from the independent churches. The claim is that “after death they still alive in the spiritual world, we communicate with them through ceremonies and rituals (interview with Xolani Kopolo).¹⁰²

This empirical result is comparable to the result of literature study in 4.2.2.1 on Supreme Being and ancestors. As Soga (193:149) remarks, the sameness between Supreme Being and ancestors is caused by the monotheism of the Xhosa tribe, and “no distinction can be made between sacred and secular” (Tayler 1963:64). According to fig. 5, St. John’s and Zion church groups are outstanding in number among other churches, even among other independent churches. It appears that this outstanding percentage of the two groups is also closely related with other questions on the general ideas of ancestors. There is also an indication that the more with the people adhere to ancestor worship, the stronger their affirmation of a sameness of between Supreme Being and ancestors. However, this empirical research addresses the identity of God and the identity of ancestors, showing that there may be some similarities in as much as they are as supernatural beings, but there are qualitative differences because God is creator while ancestors are creatures. Consequently, the understanding of Xhosa Christians, especially in the African Independent Churches, about the role of ancestors in salvation begins from the understanding of the identity of God and ancestors in terms of consistency and qualitative differences.

¹⁰¹ The abbreviations; ‘bap’; ‘pen’; ‘o.ind’; ‘ref’; ‘meth’ refer to Baptist; Pentecostal; Other Independent; Reformed; and Methodist, respectively.

¹⁰² Xolani Kopolo is a lay preacher at St John’s Apostolic Faith Mission, which is one of the biggest St. John’s churches in Khayelitsha. His age is about forty–five years old, and he is a high school teacher. He experienced a healing in his church before he became a member.

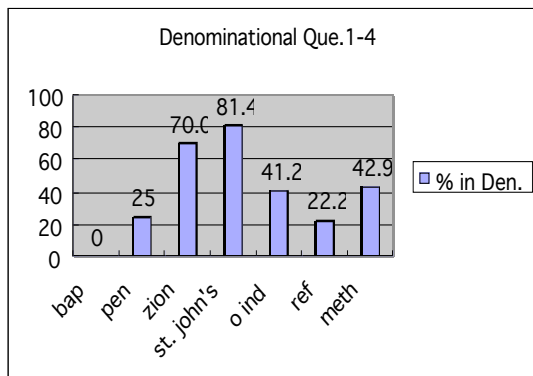


fig. 6 Denominational Que 1-4

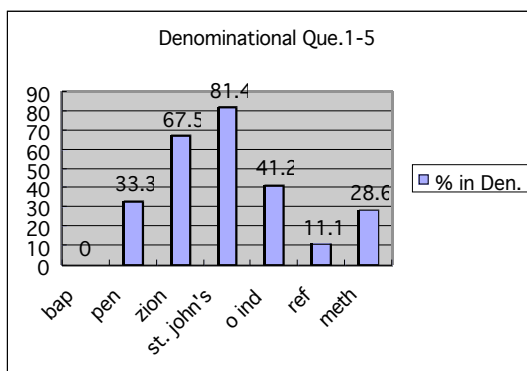


fig. 7 Denominational Que 1-5

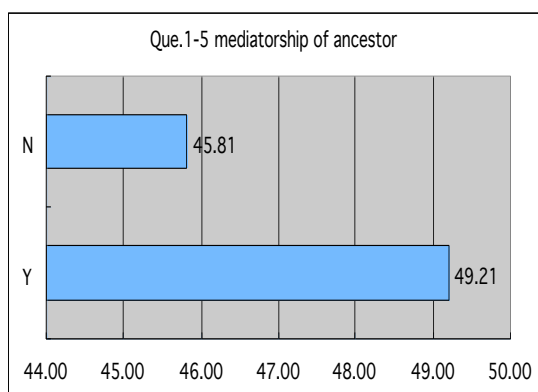


fig. 8 Que 1-5

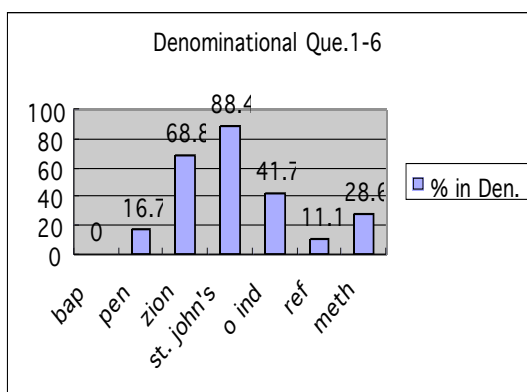


fig. 9 Denominational Que 1-6

Question 1-4 - Have you experienced contacts with your ancestors? Of the respondents, 53.66% have experienced contacts with their ancestors. Most of these claim that they have had these contacts mostly through dreams and visions and during ancestral ceremonies when their parents introduce them to ancestors. Some even claims that the Holy Spirit introduced the ancestors to them. A distinctive feature of this result is that not only African Independent Christians experience ancestor contact in dreams, but also some of the main-line church members, especially Methodists do. In some cases, some Christians from main-line churches claim that they no longer experience ancestor contact even though it had occurred in certain ways before they were converted to Christianity. For instance, Mphuthumi Fudumele witnesses that after his conversion to Christianity, ancestor interventions stopped.¹⁰³

Question 1-5, - Do you believe in the mediatorship of ancestors to the descendants? At least

¹⁰³ Mphuthumi Fudumele is a male lay preacher. He has been attending African Theological College from 2006.

49.21% of Xhosa Christians responded positively and approximately, the same number of people, 49.74%, answered that they have experienced the mediatorship of ancestors in answer to Question 1-6. Majority of the members of the independent churches, especially Zion and St. John's churches, believe in the mediatorship of their ancestors. As we remarked above, Xhosa people generally consider that their ancestors and Jesus are both ancestors. For them, the two work together; while Jesus is more concerned with salvation work, their ancestors work for daily needs of their descendants. "Jesus is also an ancestor but the only difference is that He is superior to the other ancestors. In other words, we may say that the spiritual quality is what differentiates Christ from the ancestors" (interview with Xolani Kopolo of St. John's church).

It can be deduced from the available data that Xhosa Christians' understanding of the mediatorship of ancestors is not related to salvation itself, but to their daily needs. For them, the meaning of a mediator is a sort of guardian. Oosthuizen (1991:21) shows that; "Since God created the universe and all matter, the ancestors are considered to be the framers and supporters of the world in which their descendants live". Ancestors are mediators to mainly the members of the African Independent Churches; others do not believe their ancestors to be mediators. This difference in the belief among Xhosa Christians stems from the different ideologies on the identity of ancestors regarding their relationship with the Supreme Being.

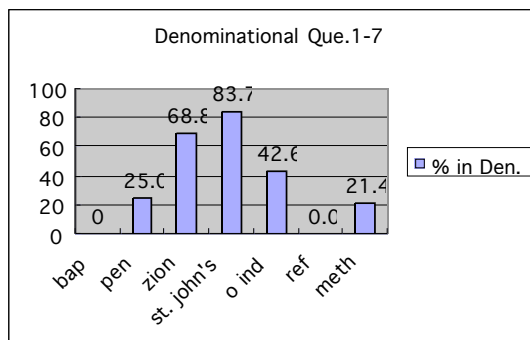


fig. 10 Denominational Que 1-7

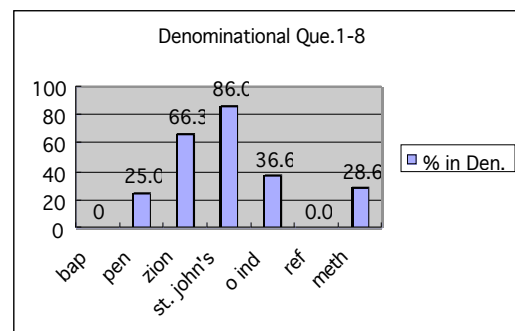


fig. 11 Denominational Que 1-8

Questions 1-7 and 1-8 address beliefs in and experiences of ancestral curses or blessings (e.g. healing) on the descendants. In answer to Question 1-7, 49.48% of Xhosa Christians answered that they believe ancestors can curse and bless their descendants, and exactly the same percentage responded that they experienced their blessing. Both curses and blessing are an evidence of intervention of ancestors. For example, in Zion churches, healing is not merely a blessing, but it is also a method of spreading the Christian gospel as healing mainly attracts

outsiders. Of the respondents, 32% mention healing as either the main or the additional method of recruitment. Pretorius (2004:58) observes that; “the Zionist’s signs of healing (cure from ailments, other afflictions, barrenness, mental illness or demons) become known and draw newcomers to the churches who, in turn, value the healing experiences and witness to others”. Thus, healing is a powerful tool of mission in Zionist churches. Further, Pretorius (2004:300-301) explains that; “Mainly when they talk about healing, it is a spiritual and bodily healing, which is holistic” (:91). This holistic kind of healing, based on their practice of prophetism is unique in the sense that it deals with people’s basic problems. His suggestion is that the emphasis on healing faith is the way to believe in the Xhosa traditional culture. Healing is therefore, an expression of identity in Xhosa indigenous churches.

Question 1-9 - Do you feel afraid of ancestors? Why and when do you feel afraid of the ancestors? In responding, 42.67% confirm that they are afraid their ancestors. For instance, Xolani Kopolo responds that; “I’m afraid because when I don’t respect them they can curse me or be angry with me. I must fully respect them and do all that is required of me otherwise I will be a victim of every kind of disease and that can also affect our family relation.” Those who are afraid of their ancestors believe the ancestors are still living and can interfere with their everyday lives. Wanamaker (1997:285) affirms that the influence of Christianity has reshaped ancestral aspects of these fears in certain ways. He claims that; “Christianity also has helped overcome much of the fear”. Similarly, Lungu (1982:105) also remarks that for Xhosa people, the question of fear in ancestor matters already belongs to classic Xhosa tradition because the Gospel should liberate the Xhosa people from the fear. However, as can be observed from fig. 12, in some African Independent Churches, especially in St. John’s and some Methodist churches, the people are not yet escaped from the fear of ancestors. This shows that in main-line churches, the Gospel has not much influence over ancestral matters.

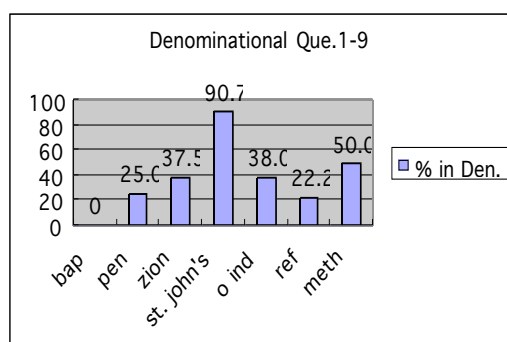


fig. 12 Denominational Que 1-9

On Question 1-10, the percentages which perform these various rituals are; *Imbeleko* (a thing with which to carry on the back); 58.12%, *Ukwaluka* (boy's initiation); 36.13%, *Intonjane* (girl's initiation); 29.06%, *Ngcamisa/Inthsayeelo* (announcing the ceremony to the ancestors and requesting their blessing); 31.15%, *Mojiso* (this ceremony takes place seven days after a boy is circumcised); 34.29%, *Ukutyiswa amasi* (being fed with sour milk); 31.15%, *Umbulelo*(thanksgiving sacrifice); 26.70%, *Ukukhapha* (sending off); 29.84%, *Ukubuyisa* (bringing back); 25.39%, *Intselo* (beer drinking); 27.23%, *Intlamba peki* (immediate ceremony after death of a family member); 30.63, *Ukukhululwa kozilo*; 33.51%.

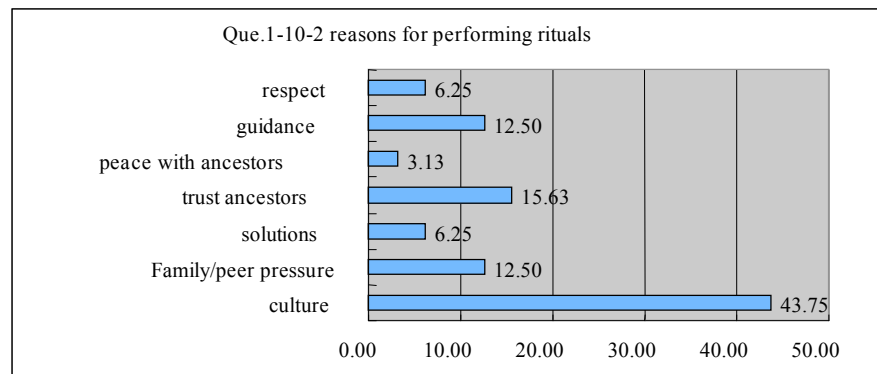


fig. 13 Que 1-10-2 Reason for performing rituals

Furthermore, from fig.13, the reason Xhosa Christians perform ancestral rituals can be interpreted. The responses are related to their daily needs and those whose needs are classified as 'guidance' represent (12.50%). Those in need of 'solution to problems' are (6.25%), while majority of the responses are culture-related reasons. It indicates that most Xhosa Christians who adhere to ancestral rituals consider these rituals as merely cultural, not religious. Nevertheless, all rituals are based on religious factors and the religious contents are often hidden under a cultural cloak. Thus, all culturally-coloured religions are symbolised in their culture with sociological dimensions holistically. "In this respect traditional African worldview, like ancestor rituals, are holistic because religion covers all areas of life, from social existence to material production" (Mohoba 1981:53, cit., Wanamaker 1997:286). The fact that some of them do not even know how these rituals are related with the religious dimension indicates that they already consider these rituals holistically in their traditional worldview and in life.

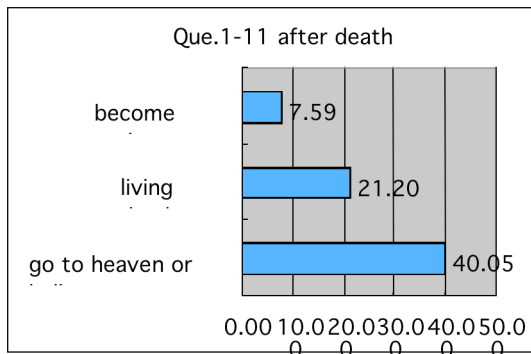


fig. 14 Que 1-11 After death

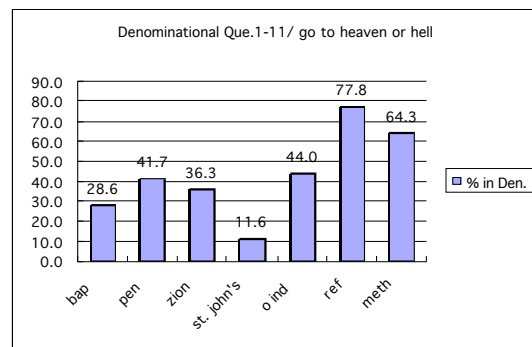


fig. 15 Denominational Que 1-11/ go to heaven or hell

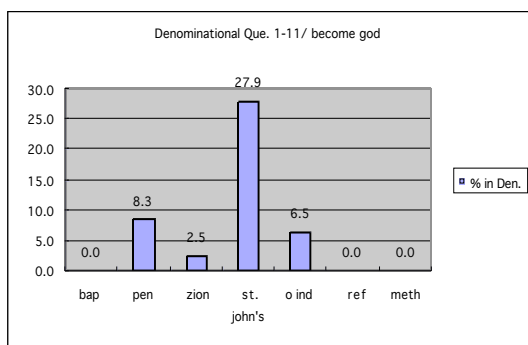


fig. 16 Denominational Que 1-11/ living dead

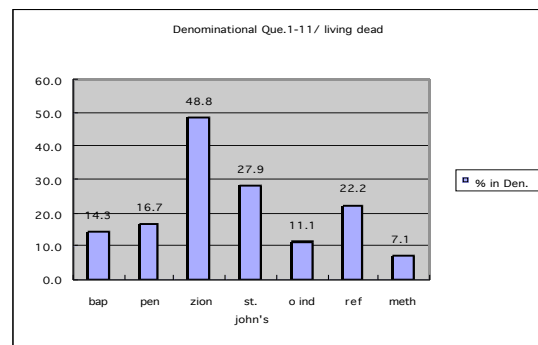


fig. 17 Denominational Que 1-11/ become god

In response to the questions which cover fig.14-17 on what happens to people after death, 40% of people affirm that the dead go to either heaven or hell. According to the categories of mission theologies drawn up by Bevans and Schroeder, these people's eschatology belongs to Type A. There is a futurist eschatology that the end time is to come, wholly in the future, realised eschatology, which is regarded as a personal and inner reality, and inaugurated eschatology, which is already inaugurated but is not yet fully accomplished. The main words in 'this type of eschatology, are death, judgement, heaven and hell' (Bevans & Schroeder 2004:42). However, the ideology of the dead in the African Independent Churches is very different from that of the main-line churches. In the same way, there are different views even among the independent churches. For instance, while Zion church members adhere more to the belief that ancestors 'become living dead,' St. John's church members believe that they 'become god.' The philosophy of the churches on the status of ancestors after dead is closely related to their eschatology.

Firstly, the status of the dead in African view is understood in the context of *ubuntu* and *memoria*. For Bujo (2001:20), "Africans tend in practice to speak about human beings rather

than about God; this is due to the view that one who pays heed to the dignity of the human person also pleases God". For Bujo, this means that the notion of the Supreme Being in African might be understood in more various dimensions, which should be integrated. In other words, it is not that Xhosa people cannot distinguish between ancestors and the Supreme Being, but when they meet ancestors in *memoria*¹⁰⁴ they actually meet Supreme God integrally.

Secondly, the Xhosa ideology of ancestor is quite human-centred, or focused on human needs, therefore, ancestors need to enjoy continuity and have divine power to be able to influence their descendants in certain ways. Finally, their ideology of the after death is categorised as 'inaugurated eschatology,' which concerns economic and political liberations (Bevans & Schroeder 2004:68). However, their African concept of holistic meaning here in terms of the status of the dead is unique, and differs with Bevans and Schroeder's definition of holistic understanding. The dead and the living holistically create the status of the dead.

4.4.2.2 The church and ancestor matters

This section is on the relationship of the members with the church on ancestor matters; that is, whether they conflict with their churches or not over ancestor matters. In response to *Question 2-1 (Does your Church allow you to practise ancestor worship?)*, as many as 46.86% of Xhosa Christians answered in the affirmative. One lay preacher, Xolani Kopolo of St. John's church comments that; "our stance as a church is that we encourage our congregation to respect their ancestors and because of that we never experience any form of conflict whatsoever. Here in our church, we have functions related to ancestral worship." His statement can be confirmed if we consider the generational results from the empirical study.¹⁰⁵ According to the result, young generations of churches in Khayelitsha positively adhere to ancestor-related matters. It shows that these young generations have imbibed their traditions through modelling, teaching and rituals etc., in churches. On Question 2-3 about confliction with church authorities in terms of ancestor worship, 31.17% of Christians claim they have experienced such confliction.

One of the main problems with ancestor matters is that different denominations or churches have different ideas about ancestor matter, even in the independent churches. The reason for these different stances appears at first to be connected with the influence of missionary and mission

¹⁰⁴ See Bujo's *Foundations of an African Ethic*, 2001, Chapter 2.

¹⁰⁵ See appendix 3.

churches. On the contrary, the survey shows that missionaries and mission churches did not influence in this matter. In other words, the diverse attitudes toward ancestor matters in the independent churches do not come from outside, but from inside.¹⁰⁶

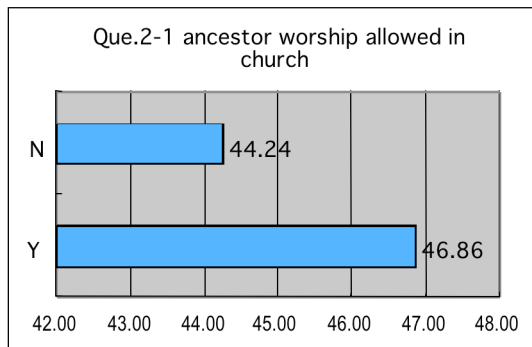


fig. 18 Que. 2-1 Ancestor worship allowed in church

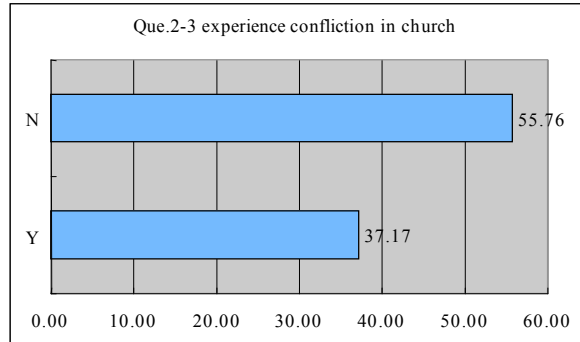


fig. 19 Que. 2-3 Experience conflict in church

4.4.2.3 Salvation and culture in ancestor matters

The questions addressed here concern the ideology of salvation and culture. The first among these is *Question 3-1 - Do you believe that your ancestors can be involved in saving their descendants?* A total of 48.69% of Xhosa Christians believe that ancestors are involved in their salvation in certain ways. In Zion (63.8%) and St. John's churches (90.7%) particularly, there is an overwhelming response to the question in the affirmative. In the interview with Xolani Kopolo, he claims that; "ancestors can save us by making us alert to what is going to happen in our lives. That can happen through dreams; they can tell you that you must go to church or that you must join a particular church. As I have noted before, Jesus and ancestors go hand in hand; there is no contradiction of any form whatsoever." Thus, for them, the role of the ancestor in salvation is actually to warn or guide them.

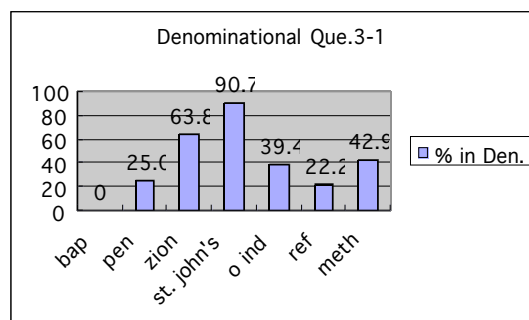


fig. 20 Denominational Que. 3-1

¹⁰⁶ See Evaluation of Question 4-7 below.

It would be significant to enquire why the people respond that the roles of ancestors are also related with salvation, especially among the African independent groups. Why do they seek the salvation through Jesus but confine the roles of ancestors to caring for the daily needs of the living? Bediako's observation of the holistic ideology of salvation of African traditional religion is that; "salvation in the traditional African world involves a certain view of the realm of spirit-power and its effect upon the physical and spiritual dimensions of human existence" (Bediako 1993:57). Perhaps this view can provide answer to this question. Bediako asserts that; "our reflection about Christ must speak to the questions posed by such a worldview (:58)." As Pobee suggests, Jesus as the Supreme Being and the greatest ancestor provides the sanction of the good life; holistic salvation is come true through our greatest ancestor Jesus, or through our 'elder brother', if we adopt Bediako's term (:63).

For St. John's Christians who were oppressed under the Apartheid regime, Christ as saviour is 'symbolised' as co-sufferer, liberator, and healer (Maluleke 2000:83). In Thomas' view, Jesus' public life is symbolic for Xhosa people. When they suffered under Apartheid, Jesus was a symbol of co-sufferer, just as Jesus suffered under the Roman Empire. When he broke the power of death in his resurrection and appearance, it symbolised his power and liberation over the profane world. The transformative power of the Holy Spirit saves Xhosa people from suffering and death, and like the symbolised Jesus, they will be raised from death and suffering, and will then be transformed (Thomas 1999:68-71).

In this regard, the Xhosa concept of salvation, at least in Zion and St. John's churches, is an integral one. This means that salvation does not only entail the deliverance of their spirit by Jesus, it also integrally contains physical deliverance from daily difficulties, as Xolani Kopolo mentions in his remark about salvation above. The people believe that Jesus and ancestors work together in an integrally oriented salvation. Thus, for 48.69% of Xhosa Christians Jesus is the proto-ancestor in this interpretation. In this holistic idea of salvation as expressed by Gort (cit., Bevans & Schroeder 2004:69), "the church proclaims salvation by preaching reconciliation *with* God... *with* the poor [in Khayelitsha]... into a community where in Christ the dividing walls have been broken down." We can find holistic meaning of salvation in *ubuntu* community, which also works in diviners, in the living and the dead.

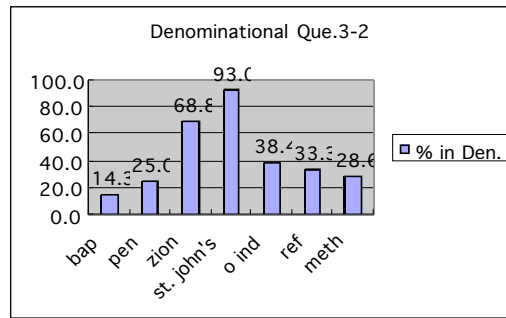


fig. 21 Denominational Que. 3- 2

Question 3-2 - Do ancestral rituals have religious factors? To this question, 50.52% of Xhosa Christians respond positively. Moreover, most respondents from the Zion and St. John's churches believe that ancestral rituals are religious. All religious factors can be revealed in spite of the diverse cloaks of culture. The aim of Question 3-2 is find out how Xhosa Christians regard ancestor matters, whether as religion or merely traditional culture. Again, Xolani Kopolo affirms that; "ancestral worship is the religion of Xhosa people according to their culture and customs. We, as Xhosa people believe that we connect with God through them. As I have said before, even here in the church we do practise some related rituals and customs."

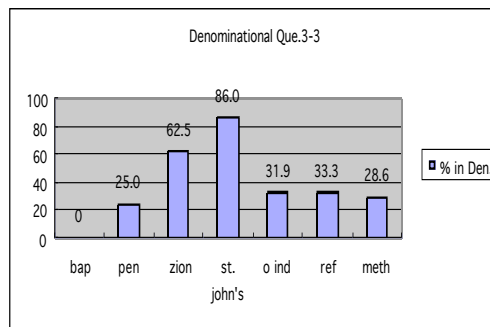


fig. 22 Denominational Que. 3-3

Question 3-3 - Do you contact God through your ancestors? A total of 43.46% of Xhosa Christians respond that they contact God through ancestors. If we consider 3-3-1, (*Is Jesus also a mediating ancestor?*), 50.24% of those who respond positively to Question 3-3 express the belief that Jesus is also a mediating ancestor. As we noted, members of the independent churches in particular, consider Jesus as their ancestors, and believe that both their physical ancestors and Jesus work as mediators for their integral-oriented salvation. However, most Christians of the main-line churches believe that Jesus is the only mediator for them.

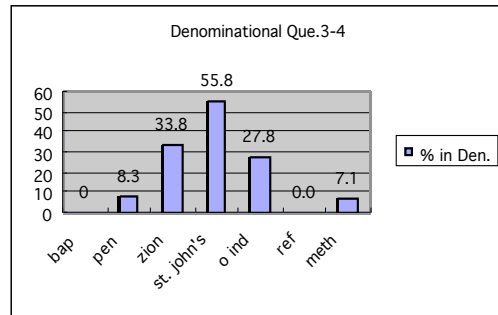


fig. 23 Denominational Que. 3-4

Question 3-4 - Do you still depend on sangoma? Only 29.58% of Xhosa Christians respond that they rely on *sangomas*. As can be observed from fig. 23 above, a good number of St. John's church members in particular, rely on *sangomas*, who normally act as healers, prophets and mediators. These *sangomas* often use pure water to heal and the people claim that some of these *sangomas* have power to foretell the future of the congregation members. Xolani Kopolo further comments that; "*Sangomas* here in our church are converted to be fortune-tellers. They can perform similar roles as prophets in the church and they work together for healing and prediction. The role of prophets is to foretell what will happen to the church."

4.4.2.4 Indigenisation and ancestor matters

This section is about the possibilities for the indigenisation of ancestor matters in Xhosa Church. On Question 4-1, which is whether *Christian teachings are compatible with Xhosa ancestor belief* or not, 42.67% of Xhosa Christians answered that Xhosa ancestor worship is compatible with Christianity. While most of the responses on compatibility come from both the Zion and St. John's churches, the main-line churches, except the Methodist church, deny compatibility. Considering the relation between the gospel and culture, African Independent Churches are more inclined to keep their cultures than the main-line churches when they encounter with Christianity. As we indicated in our thesis, 'worshipping or venerating their ancestor' is not our primal concern in considering reciprocal dialogue in intercultural and intracultural dimension. Our main concern is how genuine gospel is revealed in the Xhosa cultural context. As we also noted in our discussion of mutual indwelling, mutual space, and mutual identity, genuine Christianity is a developing process, when the people humbly commit themselves to other religious cultures.

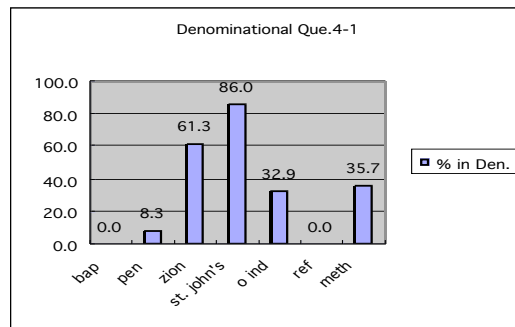


fig. 24 Denominational Que. 4-1

Accordingly, *perichoresis* as intercultural hermeneutics focuses on the meanings of each religious culture, which is *ubuntu* in the case of the Xhosa context. From the findings from Question 4-4 (see fig. 25 below), the meanings of ancestor-related religious culture of Xhosa Christianity are often associated with blessings, which are closely related with the *ubuntu* concept.¹⁰⁷ We can open mutual space through *ubuntu*, which is one of the most important meanings of Xhosa religious culture (ancestor related matter) among Xhosa Christians, and dialogue with this meaning in *perichoretic* evaluation.

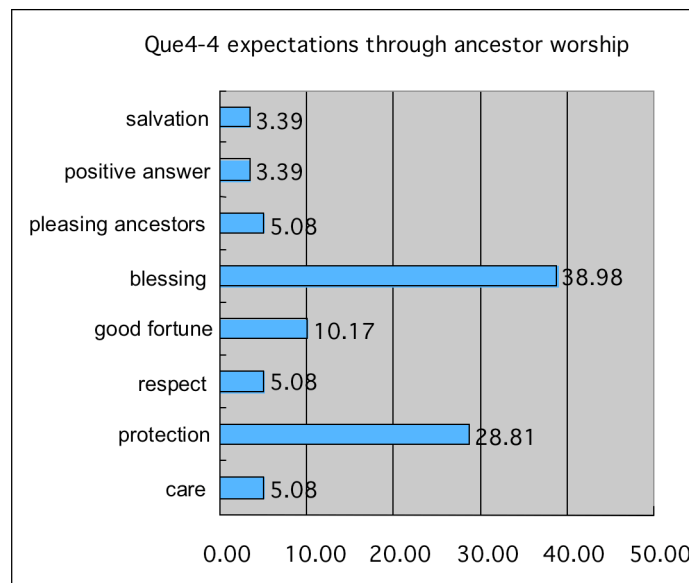


fig. 25 Que. 4-4 Expectations through ancestor worship

Question 4-7 - Are you (your church) influenced by missionaries or mission church directly?
The purpose of the question is to enable us determine the influencing power of missionaries and

¹⁰⁷ See. 6.2.3.2 Dynamic nature and ubuntu, and 6.2.3.3 Contextuality through *ubuntu* for more detailed evaluation.

mission churches on Xhosa churches in Khayelitsha concerning ancestor worship. The response (see fig. 26 below) from 38.22% of Xhosa Christians in Khayelitsha is that they are influenced by missionaries and mission churches in certain ways. In this survey, 29% of the people responded that they dislike foreign Christianity and their cultural form and prefer Xhosa traditional forms while 29% of Xhosa Christians prefer foreign Christianity and its teachings. The attitude of 41.36% is that of acceptance of the teachings of foreign Christianity in the context of traditional Xhosa custom. Moreover, a total of 71% of Xhosa Christians want to retain their traditional forms and contents along with their faith. According to the result of empirical research, even though each denomination of Khayelitsha churches has been influenced by missionaries and mission churches, the response to the question on whether they would prefer to retain their traditions, are almost the same. This shows that missionaries and mission churches do not influence independent churches, especially Zion and St. John's churches in any significant way.¹⁰⁸ In the case of St. John's church, in which 68.8% of members have experienced contact with missionary or mission church, it is of particular interest to note that they have not been much influenced by these mission churches on ancestor-related matters or traditional African beliefs.

In the survey based on generational grouping, approximately half of the people (irrespective of their age) indicate a positive attitude to ancestor matters. This result is comparable to the results in the total statistics.¹⁰⁹ What this means is that churches in Khayelitsha (according to their denominations) have handed over all the ideologies of ancestor worship to the next generation through their church life and education. If we consider the split ideologies of churches according to the denominations in Khayelitsha on ancestor matters, it appears that subsequent generations will also experience the same situation, especially in Zion and St. John's churches. This may happen in spite of the claim that Christians living in urbanised Khayelitsha and in post-Apartheid era do not adhere much to ancestor worship (cf. Pauw's survey).

¹⁰⁸ See appendix 3 for the result.

¹⁰⁹ See appendix 3.

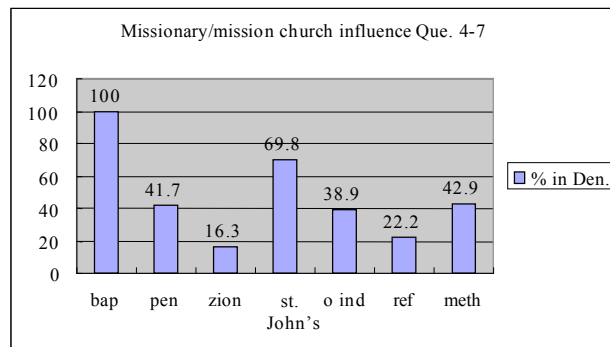


fig. 26 Missionary/mission church influence Que. 4-7

4.4 Conclusion

Just as Chapter 3 addressed the Korean religious cultural situation, this chapter has examined the religious cultural situation of Xhosa churches on ancestor-related matters. To reconstruct the theological and cultural identity of Xhosa churches, we examined the witnesses of mission churches and Western missionaries and through intercultural hermeneutics; we could observe how their theological and cultural identities continue to shift with regard to ancestral matters.

Our finding is that diverse theological and cultural identities are interwoven in Xhosa churches on ancestral issues. There are different aspirations among the Western missionaries and mission churches and indigenous Xhosa churches in Khayelitsha on how to construct their identities. In addition, the exclusivistic and inclusivistic approaches of the Western mission and mission churches are undergoing a process of dialogue over ancestor matters in South Africa. We have also noted that some indigenous attempts to dialogue with their own religious cultures generally ended in a trap of the inclusive approach.

To identify the shifting ideas of Xhosa churches in post-Apartheid era an empirical research for evaluating these ideas was deemed necessary. This would enable us to reconstruct the theological and cultural identities related to ancestor matters in the encountering phase with the *other*. Through the empirical study, it was observed that Xhosa churches in Khayelitsha have diverse theological and cultural identities. Broadly, their religious and cultural identities regarding ancestor matters are clearly divided into two namely, the African Independent Churches, and the main line churches. Among the African Independent Churches, Zionist and St. John's especially, show stronger adherence to their own religious culture in their churches.

However, we cannot simply assume that these indigenous churches are synchronised with non-

Christian traditions, which is ancestor worship. Their worldview and the way of approaching God etc., have a distinctive aspect, which is more holistic. The best way to encounter with shifting ideas about ancestors in Xhosa churches and to find the way to learn genuine Christianity mutually is to consider their meanings of ancestor. *Ubuntu* is a good example of how to create mutual space in encountering with Xhosa Christianity on matters of ancestors. It has been noted that the aim of classical intercultural hermeneutics is mutual understanding focused on harmonisation. This hermeneutics is seen as instrumental; “the reader takes possession of the text, makes the text his own prosperity. In this regard, it is relational. And it also based on existential understanding of truth” (Ariaraja 2005:94). Furthermore, “intercultural hermeneutic tradition would emerge only in the context of genuine interaction between peoples of religions and cultures, as they struggle to discover purpose and meaning of their life together” (:101).

In the next chapter, we shall evaluate the theological and cultural identities of Korean missionaries, who currently, work among Xhosa people in Khayelitsha.

CHAPTER 5

‘NEW HOME’ OF KOREAN MISSIONARIES ?

5.1 Introduction

The meaning of the Xhosa name Khayelitsha is ‘new home.’ Now, Khayelitsha has become a ‘new home’ for Korean missionaries. All the same, the problem for Korean missionaries in the encountering phase with Xhosa churches is that there are some theological and cultural barriers between them and Xhosa Christianity because of differing traditional religious cultural background, which we considered in Chapters 3 and 4. In this chapter therefore, we shall introduce, discussed, and evaluate the most conflicting aspects of the Korean-Xhosa encounter on ancestor-related matters in Khayelitsha area.

In this regard, the first area of conflict to be examined is the theological understanding of the Supreme Being. The dualistic background of Korean missionaries, which recognises a qualitative dichotomy between the Supreme Being and other beings, and the discontinuity between the dead and the living, is confronted with the monistic or holistic understanding of religious tradition of Xhosa, which is the vague continuity between the Supreme Being and other beings and the communion between ancestors and living descendants.

Secondly, confrontation comes from the role of the dead toward the living descendants and here, it is all about mediatorship, and salvation and culture. Some Xhosa churches believe that the mediatorship of Jesus is limited to his redemptive work while ancestors intervene directly in the minor matters of daily life or present their daily needs and difficulties to the Supreme Being. However, in the more radical view, even ancestors work together with Jesus to ensure salvation. It is therefore possible for traditional Christian doctrines, which teach non-intervention of the dead to collide with the ideology of mediatorship of ancestors of Xhosa religious tradition. Thirdly, issues of eschatology concerning the status of the dead also indicate a potential area of conflict. In traditional Christian doctrines, the dead are viewed as beings, who are waiting for the final judgement; they are not divine beings but in Xhosa tradition, the dead become deities, who are merely different in quality.

How then do Korean missionaries understand Xhosa theological and cultural views on ancestor

matters in Khayelitsha in the face of these different theological and cultural identities? More specifically, when their preliminary assumptions on Xhosa ancestor worship encounter with the facts of the matter, how do they respond to these? What are the alternative indigenised attitudes of Korean missionaries and the shifting ideas that are based on their missiological stances? In this case, we suggest an intercultural approach to Korean missionaries in encountering with Xhosa ancestor worship on the mission field. Nonetheless, to evaluate these questions, an empirical study on Korean missionaries in Khayelitsha was also conducted. This empirical study has a preliminary character for the *perichoretic* evaluation of Chapter 6.

5.2 Interview and evaluation of Korean missionaries

Based on Nicholls' recommendation, we considered what would be needed to establish missiological identities of Korean missionaries. For Nicholls (1979:7), "Third World missionaries need to understand at least four different cultures: the Bible's, that of the Western missionary who first brought the gospel, their own and of the people to whom they take the gospel". In the light of this, our empirical survey uses questionnaire form, which is based on intercultural hermeneutics of *perichoresis*. The aim of the survey is to the Korean missionaries, who work in Khayelitsha, to determine the amaXhosa's theological and cultural identities regarding ancestor matters.

The object of the survey is the Korean missionaries, who currently work among the Xhosa people in Khayelitsha area. These are nine families and two singles. Out of these, nine missionaries respond to this survey. Their ministries are diverse and integral, ranging from Church planting and ministering, Bible College teaching, sports ministry, Youth ministry, health care, job creation, and pre-primary school etc. They have worked in Khayelitsha from between one to twenty years. Their age group ranges from early thirties to mid-fifty. Three of them are lay people while others are qualified ministers. Moreover, they belong to diverse denominations including, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Holiness churches.

The method of survey was through face-to-face interviews and the use of printed questionnaires. These interviews took place between the 28th of June and 15th of July 2007 in Khayelitsha and Cape Town. The questionnaire is designed in three parts. The questions in the first section are related to Korean missionaries' prior knowledge of ancestor-related issues including knowledge of the relation between the Supreme Being and the ancestors of Xhosa, Christology, views of life

after death, and Soteriology. The other questions address the meaning of ancestor worship, ways to contact ancestors, ancestral rituals, roles of ancestor, mediatorship of ancestor, and roles of *sangomas* in churches.

The second part of the interview surveys the reactions of Korean missionaries regarding the questions, after understanding the given facts, which are based on literature and empirical study. The third part is designed to know their experience of counselling or conflict with Xhosa people in the field on ancestor related matters and their own indigenous ideas about ancestor matters.

Whole scripts of this interview are included in Appendix 4.

5.2.1 Mission contents and types of theology

Bevans & Schroeder (2004) categorise six contents of mission, which are Christology, ecclesiology, eschatology, salvation, anthropology and culture, under three theological types, which are Type A, B, and C. We shall use their classification to identify and evaluate missiological and cultural identities of Korean missionaries in South Africa as deduced primarily from the findings of the empirical research.

The understanding of gospel or salvation under Bevans & Schroeder's Type A is "conceived as something that is accomplished after death. It means that salvation also refers to spiritual and non-material justification of the sinner. Secondly, it also considered that salvation is personal, which means that it is something that happens only to an individual. The other sense of personal is restricted to interior, spiritual renewal, not to structural and socio-political renewal" (Bevans & Schroeder 2004:44-5). Cultural understanding of this type anticipates a negative attitude toward culture if we follow Tertullian's "what indeed has Athens to do with Jerusalem" maxim. He explains that; "from the classiest perspective, culture is normative, universal and permanent. There is really only one culture, and that is the culture of the West. Culture is developed, of course, but in Western modernity it has reached its final achievement" (:47). Thus, "this approach ushered the modern mission into colonial mission" (:48). In the meaning of culture, this type is used to consider other religious culture negatively or as the object of conquest. We can find this tendency in the exclusivistic mission models and the functional attitude of mission has a tendency to substitute other religious culture with Christian terms. However, there are two problems behind these attitudes. The first is the idea, which does not authorise religion as a sort

of culture; it separates religion from the world. The other comes from the forfeiture of the subjectivity of modern Western philosophy. The forfeiture of the subjectivity makes dialogue impossible in the inter-space at the encountering phase between religious traditions.

The Type B of Bevans & Schroeder is subtitled, mission as discovery of the truth, and it focuses on the salvation of the soul, both spiritual and intellectual. Under this category, “salvation now meant liberation from the religious superstition, attention to human welfare, and the moral improvement of humanity” (Bosch 1991:395). The purpose of Type B in culture is to show the “compatibility of human culture with Christianity” (Bevans & Schroeder 2004:60). Therefore, “the mission is carried out as a search for God’s grace that is hidden within people’s cultural, religious and historical context. It is a call to people to fulfil their deepest potential as human beings by allowing Christ to be the answer to their deepest human desires” (:61). This type has a certain commonality with the socio-political models that Bosch compares. The problem with this model is the tendency to lose the Christian identity of holistic meaning as the models limit Christian identity to only the socio-political facet. Specifically, the theocentric religious pluralism, which makes Christianity a metaphorical religion, is an appropriate example. On a cultural level, this type supports actualisation without holistic balance of the historicity of Christianity.

The Type C is more a comprehensive and integral approach, which understands salvation as a human and cosmic wholeness. Bosch (1991:399) explains that; “an integral salvation that avoids the two extremes; (1) it takes us out of the world, or only involves a personal relationship with Jesus Christ or (2) falling into positions that reduce salvation to economic justice, liberation and human solidarity”. In the case of Jerald Gort, he stresses “reconciliation in the light of the understanding of salvation, inviting people into the community and with them” (cf. Bevans & Schroeder 2004:69). However, our approach to holistic mission is more focused on holistic life in the mutual space. Our encountering with other religious traditions may happen not in our community but in the mutual space, not sharing only mercy or justice but sharing holistic life, which has to be approached with *praxis* to overcome theological dichotomies. To support a positive attitude to human culture, the cultural perspective of Type C regards culture as basically good because even though culture may need to be purified and healed for human sin. In this understanding, the *praxis* model, which is a more liberal model and the counter-cultural model, are adequate to explain culture. In the *praxis* model culture is conceived more “from the perspective of the dynamic social change, and humanity responds to the call to have the gospel

interact with culture by recognising that it is involved in culture's very construction" (Bevans & Schroeder 2004:71). Employing the counter-cultural model is the recognition of the enslaving and dehumanising aspects that culture can foster, so culture also needs to be liberated by the salvation of Christ. Nonetheless, what we stress in holistic mission is not only proclaiming "Christ as the true liberator and transformer of culture" (:71) through transforming our culture, but also through incarnational life which is the *praxis* of devotion.

5.2.2 Understanding ancestor-related matters (Part One of Questionnaire)

The aim of this segment is to determine how Korean missionaries correctly understand ancestor related matters of Xhosa people when they encounter them in the mission field. If we roughly classify these missionaries according to their understanding of these matters, missionaries A, E, G, H, I, and J (group 1) are those who understand the issues well, while B, C, D, and F (group 2) are those who do not. There are reasons for identifying the qualitative differences between missionaries regarding ancestor-related understanding of Xhosa people. Firstly, some of them (group 1) have worked among Xhosa people for a relatively longer time than others (group 2). Secondly, it is possible to find some of them in group 1 who have worked among Xhosa for a similar length of time with those in group 2, but have a better understanding than the others in group 2. It can be noted that these missionaries have different degrees of understanding of Xhosa ideas because some of them a greater interest in Xhosa context than the others. At any rate, whatever they do in the mission field, such as, church planting, Bible College, children ministry, youth ministry, health ministry, job creating etc., do not influence the results.

Question 1-1¹¹⁰

On Question 1-1, which is about Korean missionaries' understanding of Xhosa indigenous Christians' view of the relation between Xhosa ancestors and God, three of them do not respond to the question. Missionary A understands the relation between the Supreme Being and ancestor as qualitatively different. For him, "God is higher than everything, and ancestors are below Jesus." Missionary B understands that Xhosa Christians consider ancestors as some sort of gods; therefore, they have a certain consistency with the Supreme Being. For Missionary E also, Xhosa Christians view their ancestors as gods. His idea is based on the African philosophy of the 'living dead.' In addition, he understands that Xhosa Christians do not only believe that

¹¹⁰ See Appendix 4 below for the questions in this section

ancestors are gods, it is difficult to distinguish between them and the Supreme Being. He claims that they have a mixed understanding of God and ancestors but they also recognise differences in their roles. The difference is that “God is the Supreme Being and ancestors act as mediators between God and human.” Missionary H also understands that Xhosa Christians distinguish between the role of the Supreme Being and that of the ancestors. While God works for the entire human race, ancestors work for their own descendants. Similarly, Missionary I recognises a distinction in the roles, in that God is far from the descendants but ancestors are close to them to care. Missionary J understands the idea of a qualitative difference between God, who is the creator, and ancestors, who are understood from the animistic perspective of Xhosa philosophy.

Thus, only one missionary understands that Xhosa Christians consider the Supreme Being and ancestors as the same beings. However, some of them agree that there is some uniformity between the ideas of God and ancestors even if they are regarded as different divinities. Most of the missionaries understand that Xhosa Christian’s distinction is based on qualitative difference because in practice, when Xhosa distinguish the relation between God and ancestors, they actually consider their roles and in their ontological differences. It can be observed then, that Korean missionaries understand Xhosa Christians’ view of the relation between God and the ancestors from different angles, especially from the perspective of animism, qualitative difference etc. Even though they could not draw a big picture of the understanding of Xhosa churches on the relation between God and ancestors, each of the missionaries pinpoints important key concepts.

Question 1-2

This question is about the difference between the mediatorship of Jesus and that of the ancestors for Xhosa Christians. For Missionary A, Xhosa Christians regard ancestors as intimate with God and therefore, they can pray to God through ancestors. Missionary A recognises Xhosa ancestors as mediators between God and the living but could not make out the difference between the mediatorship of Jesus and that of the ancestors. Missionary E distinguishes the mediatorships; while ancestors care for the daily needs of the descendants, Jesus works for salvation. In the case of Missionary G, he also makes a distinction like Missionary E but additionally, he claims that Jesus works as ‘chief ancestor’ in the Xhosa view. Missionary H understands that Xhosa people believe that Jesus works for White people while ancestors care for the people’s daily needs. It seems that his interpretation comes from Black theology, but this interpretation is wrong.

Missionary I indicates that there is a qualitative difference between Jesus and ancestors. Missionary J also mentions qualitative difference, but between God and Jesus. He understands that Xhosa Christians recognise ancestors as beasts according to their animistic view; they do not recognise Jesus as God. Thus, it can be inferred that Korean missionaries mainly distinguish the roles of Jesus and ancestors in terms of mediatorship.

Question 1-3

This question asks for a description of the roles of ancestors in Xhosa people's lives. Missionary A understands that Xhosa Christians believe that ancestors can solve their problems of unemployment, disease, etc. They also act as protectors and as mediator between God and human. Missionary B indicates ancestors' role as protector and guide, who show right way. Missionary D regards ancestors as those who watch over their descendants. According to Missionary E, ancestors perform passive functions; they are objects to be served by their descendants. Missionary F refers to their role as to control and help the descendants. Missionary G also mentions guidance and protection as roles, but also that they perform a social function. "Since ancestors protect norms and ethics in the society by rewarding and punishing people according to their deeds, without the ancestors the society is powerless to enforce the ethics" According to this social function, ancestors are required for sustaining the society on moral matters. However, this moral request is not irrelevant to the religious dimension of the divine ancestor's role. Missionary H refers to the role of ancestors as that of a medium. Missionary I mentions three functions of ancestor; healer, helper, and protector. Finally, Missionary J indicates that they look after their descendants and bring them luck, but the ancestors also judge wrong-doers. It is clear that these Korean missionaries recognise most of the roles ancestors are expected to play in the lives of their descendants. They recognise that Xhosa Christians expect their ancestors to meet their life-oriented needs.

Question 1-4

This question is about the state of the dead in Xhosa belief. According to missionary A, Xhosa Christians believe that the dead are still alive and can communicate with and influence their descendants. Missionary E indicates that the reason why Xhosa people regard funeral ritual as the biggest ritual is that they believe ancestors do influence descendants. Missionary G seems to allude to the *ubuntu* concept in his own response. He mentions that ancestors do not merely have

relationship with descendants in certain ways; they are part of the family. He notes that; “they remain as part of the family and share and intervene in every family affair.” According to missionary H, he suggests that; “they do not know where they go after death’ and this may be the reason Xhosa Christians do not follow the eschatology of main-line churches, which can be summarised as death, judgement, heaven and hell (cf. Bevans & Schroeder 2004:68). Lastly, Missionary J describes in detail the process of becoming an ancestral spirit from the time of death. It is certain that Korean missionaries generally understand that Xhosa Christians believe that their ancestors are still alive a certain state and can influence them.

Question 1-5

This question is about whether Xhosa Christians are afraid of their ancestors or not. Missionary A notes that Xhosa Christians are afraid of their ancestors because descendants experience ancestors in dream and they believe ancestors can punish them. Missionary G understands that if descendants neglect the requests of ancestors, ancestors punish them. Only few of the missionaries relate to this question. Missionary G mentions that when ancestors express their wrath, the people lose their jobs, become bankrupt, become divorced, or suffer incurable diseases, their children die, and their wives become barren, etc. Most Korean missionaries regard ancestors as objects of fear for Xhosa Christians because they can punish or curse of their descendants when the need arises.

Question 1-6

This question is about how Xhosa Christians contact their ancestors. Missionary A considers ancestral rituals as a tool for meeting their ancestors while Missionary B refers to ancestral worship. For Missionary E, people can experience ancestors in ordinary ways. Missionary G shows that ancestors can be contacted through dreams, ritual ceremonies and the *sangoma*. For missionary I, the contact can be through a *sangoma*’s prayer and through dance. Missionary J regards dreams as the primary way to contact their ancestors but if they cannot interpret the contents of the dreams, they ask a *sangoma*. He also notes that ancestors can transform their features to visit descendants and can eat and drink with them. Most of the Korean missionaries mention that the important ways Xhosa Christians meet their ancestors are through dreams, rituals and *sangoma*. However, meeting ancestors in ordinary ways or in transformed states is not common.

Question 1-7

This question is about the meaning of ancestor worship for Xhosa Christians. Missionary E understands that the meaning of ancestor worship is related with life-oriented issues such as, protection or solving difficult matters. Missionary G considers the meaning in the context of *ubuntu* concept. Ancestor worship entails having intimate relationship with their *ubuntu* community that is the living, the dead and the future descendants. He further explains this meaning with the concepts of the living dead and *memoria* and considers another meaning within the social structure. Just as the meaning of ancestors in the Confucian society of *Chosên* was to sustain the society on the ethical and religious levels, he reckons that the meaning of ancestor worship for Xhosa society also has the same function.

Missionaries H and I indicate protection as part of the meaning of ancestor worship. However, Missionary J explains the meaning from *ubuntu*'s community concept noting that a "person joins the community of the living-dead... the living-dead are still people; they return to their families from time to time." While most Korean missionaries understand the meaning of ancestor worship as associated with life-oriented needs, blessing, protection, and solving problems, Missionaries G and J consider it from the viewpoint of *ubuntu* concept. This means they understand the Xhosa society and its contents more deeply.

Question 1-8

This question is about what Xhosa Christians expect from ancestor worship. Missionary A indicates healing and daily needs as the expectations of the people while Missionary C mentions blessing and avoiding curses. Missionary E identifies solution to problems as a main expectation, and Missionaries G and I refer to blessing. All the Korean missionaries agree that Xhosa Christians expect solution to life-oriented needs and their difficulties as blessings from their ancestors. Missionary J in particular, observes that Xhosa Christians also expect family ties through ancestor worship; "When they share food at the communal level, the distribution of food brings members of the extended family together and reinforces their ties with one another". As he mentions, Xhosa ancestral rituals are family affairs rather than social. For Xhosa people who are living in urbanised and post-Apartheid era, family ties are crucial.

Question 1-9

This question inquires into the reason Xhosa Christians still practise or adhere to ancestral worship and its related rituals. Missionary A's opinion is that it is "because they doubt their belief in Jesus; they believe that God works hand-in-hand with ancestors." It appears that this missionary assumes that Jesus is in competition with the ancestors. He also mentions that Xhosa Christians adhere to ancestor worship so that they can become familiar with their traditional religious-culture and experience their ancestors in their daily lives. Missionaries C, D, and F regard the practice as merely cultural. It means that Xhosa Christians consider ancestor matters as culture, and not as religion. However, we cannot simply regard this as a matter of distinction between religion and culture. For Missionary E, it is because "their ideology of a future life after death is similar to that of Christianity." It means that Christianity teaching on eschatology and Xhosa ideology of death or after-death share some commonalities. Missionary G notes that the concepts of God and ancestors are often mixed with African traditional religions, especially in Zion and St. John's churches. This implies that there is some form of syncretism of Christian doctrines and African traditional religion in these churches. The stance of Missionary H is more exclusivistic as he notes that Xhosa Christians adhere to ancestor worship "because they do not have a conviction of salvation." For him, ancestor worship totally contradicts Christianity, especially in relation to salvation. Moreover, he regards ancestor worship and its related rituals as solely religious matters. Missionary I points to a more practical reason, which is blessing, as a factor. Xhosa people adhere to ancestors because of the need for blessing. Missionary J understands that is considered insane and unreasonable for Xhosa Christians to shun ancestral worship and worship God alone. They are afraid to shun ancestor worship and change their long tradition. He seems he to suggest that for the Xhosa, ancestor worship is a traditional culture, which cannot be stopped suddenly.

Question 1-10

In this question, the missionaries are asked to describe Xhosa ancestral rituals that they know. Four of the missionaries respond that they have no idea of any ritual but the understanding of those who do appears quite simple. They mention initiations, funerals, and weddings. In particular, Missionaries E and J mention *sangoma* in relation to illness and cure. They understand that *sangomas* act as medium for performing ancestral rituals to cure diseases.

Question 1-11

This question is on the roles of *sangomas*. Korean missionaries indicate their role as that of a physical or spiritual healer and a prophet. According to Missionary G, the *sangoma* is a medium between God and human beings; prophesies and reveals God's will, even in churches. In this way, the *sangoma* is also a servant of God. Missionary J described the role of the *sangoma* well, especially in Zion church.

Question 1-12

This question is on how Xhosa Christians struggle with ancestor matters in their churches. Most of the Korean missionaries affirm that Xhosa Christians struggle with ancestor-related matters in certain ways. In the case of Missionary A, he experiences struggles with his own Xhosa members. He confesses that; "Visiting the church members in their homes to discover that they practise rituals makes them not to come to church again. Sometimes when we take part in the funerals, after preaching, we see people talking to the dead and asking them to make their way prosperous." It means that Xhosa Christians, who attend mission churches, consider that Korean missionaries oppose their own ancestral culture. When they conflict with Korean missionary on this matter, they leave the mission churches. Missionary G believes that missionaries and main-line churches influence Xhosa Christians to change their traditional beliefs. This influence helps them to practise 'sound doctrine' regarding ancestor matters but when they encounter serious misfortunes, some of these Christians privately return to their tradition. This missionary has experienced how much traditional ancestral religious culture has deeply influenced Xhosa people, even after they become Christians. Missionary J believes that Xhosa Christians misinterpret Matthew 5:17, "Do not think that I have come to do away with the Law of Moses and the teachings of the Prophets. I have not come to do away with them, but to make their teachings come true." Jesus spoke about the Law of Moses and the teachings of the prophets but many ignorant Xhosa Christians argue that the passage refers to their traditional customs and ancestor-related religious culture. He observes that Xhosa Christians have no personal conflict with ancestor matter because they manipulate Bible to suit their views.

5.2.3 Response to the facts (Part Two of Questionnaire)

The questions in this second part of the questionnaire focus on how missionaries respond to the facts and on the results of the empirical research on ancestor matters. We shall then interpret and analysis their (the Koreans') missiological stances, specifically their views of Xhosa ancestor matters.

Missionary B agrees with the facts and research results, while Missionary B does not indicate a clear missiological stance or critical opinions. From his explanation of Question 2-1, he assumes that Xhosa people traditionally adhere to animism but he notes that there is no evidence of belief in animism among Xhosa people, who live in big cities or in the suburbs of Cape Town. His view is that Xhosa people in Khayelitsha have already broken away from some of their traditional philosophies and therefore, those who live in Khayelitsha no longer adhere to animism. However, from his response to Question 2-2, his opinion is that Xhosa Christians believe that the God of Christianity is a god among many gods and that the Xhosa Christian's concept of God is polytheistic. On Question 2-3, Missionary B agrees that Xhosa Christians pray to ancestors for protection and guidance in their daily lives because they believe that ancestors are still alive as living-dead (that is, according to his response to Question 2-4). In this regard, he also believes that Xhosa Christians are afraid of their ancestors and need them for daily intervention in their affairs (cf. Question 2-5). He notes that they meet their ancestors through specific worship, which entails ancestral rituals. The meaning of ancestor worship for them is to enable them to preserve their culture, and they expect protection and solution to their problems in return. He regards these needs as the reason Xhosa people adhere to ancestor worship. Finally, the role of *sangoma* is considered the same with that of ancestors. It means the *sangoma* as a medium, helps people to be protected and cared for by ancestors.

Missionary C's stance is to accept Xhosa ancestor matters as culture. He remarks thus, "I consider it as a kind of earlier type of Christianity but it has to be processed slowly and continually through Bible study and discipleship training." Missionary C does not compromise Christology with Xhosa understanding of ancestral mediatorship in Question 2-2. In addition, Missionary C also does not agree with ancestor's role as mediator, even though he admits their existence and consider ancestor worship a cultural matter. His solution to the idea of ancestral belief is to transform them through sound doctrine in Bible study and discipleship. For him,

ancestral worship and its related ideology such as, the stance of the dead, mediatorship etc., are preliminary stages to accepting genuine Christianity. Therefore, he advocates that “we should get rid of these (rituals and *sangoma*) elements” in his response to Question 2-10.

Missionary D considers Xhosa ancestral matters as culture and it is therefore, not related to salvation; it is only cultural expression of traditions. Moreover, communicating with ancestors through dreams, inference of the ancestors in their lives and expectation of blessing from ancestors are all natural phenomena. He claims that even “atheists impute meanings to their dreams.” For him, the concept of regarding Jesus as a Supreme ancestor is also a cultural expression, which is indigenised and transformed through Xhosa churches. Missionary D fully respects and accepts ancestor matters and its related rituals. He considers that expectations of Xhosa people from their ancestors, which are blessing-oriented, are acceptable but salvation is not through ancestors but through Jesus Christ.

For Missionary E, Xhosa Christians adhere to ancestor worship based on Christian doctrine of eternal life and Xhosa ideology of life after death. Missionary E does not accept Xhosa ancestor worship because it is not biblical especially with regard to mediatorship. He declares that; “I cannot accept this because the relationship between God and human beings can only be possible through Jesus’ mediatorship.” Moreover, he attributes Xhosa ancestor worship to a self-oriented or egoistic religious belief, which he claims differs from Christianity. His opinion is that; “ancestor worship is not for ancestors but for themselves. It is most different from Christian service and I cannot accept it.” Nevertheless, he is open to the idea of memorial and respectful response of descendants to ancestors like the memorial service of Korean churches. He opines that the reason Xhosa people worship ancestors, is to find their own identity. He also could not accept the idea of *sangomas*, who work in, or outside of churches as mediator.

Missionary F has experienced different service styles of the local churches in Khayelitsha. His view is that Xhosa Christians consider God as the same being as ancestors. He claims that ancestor worship in Xhosa churches is to maintain intimate family tie and their pride in Xhosa culture. Their idea of the dead seems to be more focused on the living as ancestor worship is more related to life-oriented needs. Finally, he reckons that if the people have better access to medical benefits, the practice of ancestor worship will dwindle. It also means that if missionaries approach the issue integrally in the Xhosa churches, which adhere to ancestor worship, the practice will be reduced.

Missionaries H and I merely respond that they cannot accept all ancestral ideas and forms of Xhosa ancestor worship.

5.2.4 Response to indigenised approaches and suggestion (Part Three of Questionnaire)

Three of the missionaries had counselling with Xhosa people over ancestor matters and none of them experienced confliction with Xhosa Christians for the same reason.

Missionary C has takes a dual stance because basically, his attitude to theology is inclusive but he prefers an exclusivistic stance in practice, especially when missionary train native church leaders. He supports the inclusive approach of 3-3-1, but cautions against syncretism and the heretic tendencies in the ancestor-related matters of the Xhosa. He is especially concern that Christology should not to be compromised with Xhosa's concept of Christ.

Missionary D's approach is also inclusive although he admits a functional attitude, which is also exclusivistic. He refers to an 'Abrahamic religious approach' claiming that; "we are all the descendants of Abraham, David, and Jesus. It means we have the same ancestors." It appears that Missionary D could not distinguish exclusivistic, inclusive, and religious pluralistic approaches in missiology. However, he has an inclusive ideas he claims that the "Gospel is not to diminish what they have in culture, but to highlight that Jesus is Christ, the Saviour, in their culture." The Gospel, which is Jesus, may be revealed among the Xhosa, but it also may be engraved on their culture. In this interpretation, Xhosa culture becomes a preliminary stage of Christianity. Missionary D proposes a way to open mutual space with Xhosa culture; through the love of God. In missiological term, this is incarnational approach.

Missionary E is critical of the inclusive approach because its ideology is already too Western-oriented to understand African religious philosophy. In addition, he criticises the qualitative distinction between ancestors and Jesus as proto-ancestor, and theological basis of the inclusive approach, purgatory and communion of saints. He very well understands the weak points of a functional approach, which weakens meanings in specific religious cultures while focusing on a particular form of culture. Even if his critical evaluation of inclusive and functional approach appears rather sharp, his indigenous approach, based on exclusivistic stance equally appears too dull.

Missionary F believes that the best way to minister to Xhosa Christians is according to their own religious cultural ways. The most dangerous method is one in which missionaries merely point the way but ignore cultural diversity. Therefore, he suggests that indigenous methods by Korean missionaries when they encounter Xhosa ancestral matter should be *praxis*-oriented, that is, missionaries need to live among Xhosa people with *praxis* according to the Bible (love).

For Missionary G, the value of ancestor worship is exemplary for the living. Based on a strong exclusivistic stance, he denies the value of all ancestor-related matters but consider that only our Christian ancestors, such as those who are listed in Hebrew chapter 11, can enrich our Christian journey.

The stance of Missionary H is equally exclusivistic as he does not support any inclusive or indigenous approach; he is only open to functional approaches. He suggests that missionaries can follow a functional way based on their contexts.

In the same manner, Missionary I also holds a strong exclusivistic position. He disagrees with inclusive ideas while showing some openness to functional approaches. Missionary I does not support any indigenous approaches claiming that; “after people accept Jesus, we need to take them through the Bible. If they are growing in the Word of God, they can stop to worship ancestors.”

Missionary J affirms that ancestor worship in Christianity is out of the question; his stance is exclusivistic. His opinion is that Christians can only respect their ancestors, and in the case of ancestor-related services, Christians ought to follow biblical precepts. He suggests that African culture should be acknowledged in order to meet the people’s needs in authentic contextualisation. An example of authentic contextualisation is the re-interpretation of the meaning of strong family and societal bonds of Xhosa tradition, that is re-interpreting the meaning of the Xhosa concepts both horizontally and vertically. He has a clear understanding of the importance of meanings and that each traditional culture has to be re-interpreted in modern terminology and ideology.

5.3. Conclusion

To conclude this evaluation, it can be affirmed that Korean missionaries, who work among Xhosa people in Khayelitsha, have divergent views of ancestor worship in Xhosa churches. Most of them have exclusivistic views of these matters. In Bevans & Schroeder's classification, their stance is categorised as Type A. The authors indicate that; "In this type, there is only one normative, universal and permanent culture, which is the Western Christianity culture" (Bevans & Schroeder 2004:47). However, this type has been criticised as a basic theory of colonial mission because it considers other religious cultures negatively, and sees them as the object of conquest. Another missiological problem is the functional attitude of mission, which substitutes Christian terms for the expressions of other religious cultures without any deep concern or consciousness of the target culture's and socio-anthropological background. This tendency emanates from the idea, which does not authorise religion as some sort of culture but separates religion from the world. It also comes from the forfeiture of subjectivity that is found in the modern Western philosophy. The forfeiture of subjectivity makes dialogue impossible in the inter-space at the encountering phase between religious traditions. For Korean missionaries who hold exclusivistic viewpoint, their own theology brought from Korea could be considered equivalent to Western theology. They need to recognise the weakness of their stance because this stance can result in neo-colonial mission in their 'new home'.

It is worth noting also that the missiological stance of some the Korean missionaries (cf. Missionaries C and E) is close to the inclusive idea, which also can be explained as Type B of Bevans & Schroeder. The purpose of Type B in terms of culture is to show the "compatibility of human culture with Christianity" (:60). Thus, "the mission is carried out as a search for God's grace that is hidden within people's cultural, religious and historical context, and it is a call to people to fulfil their deepest potential as human beings by allowing Christ to be the answer to their deepest human desires" (:61). The problem of this type on a cultural level is that it supports actualisation without holistic balance of historicity of Christianity in terms of *perichoretic* evaluation.

Only Missionary F has a holistic view. Through his holistic missiological view, we can open mutual space. He suggests a *praxis*-oriented method noting that; "missionaries live with *praxis* according to the Bible (love) among Xhosa people." As we indicated in 2.2.2.1, *perichoretic* hermeneutics of gospel and culture, our missiological method to open mutual space with Xhosa

churches in terms of ancestor matters is the *praxis* of 'with'. This *praxis*-oriented method is based on a holistic mission approach, which is more focused on holistic life in the mutual space. Our encountering with Xhosa tradition, especially ancestor matters may happen, not in our community or missionary theologies but in the mutual space, not sharing only mercy or justice, but sharing holistic life, which needs to be approached with *praxis* to overcome theological dichotomies. With a positive attitude to human culture, the cultural perspective of Type C regards culture as good even though it needs to be purified and healed because of human sin. In this regard, the *praxis* model, which is a more liberal model and the counter-cultural model are adequate for explaining culture. In the *praxis* model, culture is conceived more "from the perspective of the dynamic social change, and humanity responds to the call to have the gospel interact with culture by recognising that it is involved in culture's very construction" (:71). Employing the counter-cultural model is recognition of the enslaving and dehumanising aspects that culture can foster, so that culture also needs to be liberated by the saving action of Christ. In Bevan's view, "the *praxis* model of contextual theology focuses on the identity of Christians within a culture as that culture is understood in terms of social change" (Bevans 1992:63). Nevertheless what "we stress here is not only proclaiming Jesus as the true liberator and transformer of culture" (Bevans & Schroeder 2004:71) through transforming our culture, but also through incarnational life, which is the *praxis* of devotion. Thus, *perichoresis* of incarnation theology paves authentic way for holistic mission, which is dynamic holistic life (*praxis*).

Presently, we need to consider how Korean missionaries can open mutual space and communicate in holistic ways with Xhosa churches on ancestor matters in their 'new home'.

CHAPTER 6

GENERAL CONCLUSION: “SOUTH TO SOUTH?”

TOWARDS AN INTERCULTURAL EVALUATION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the *perichoretic* evaluation of Xhosa ancestor matter from the perspectives of both Xhosa Christians and Korean missionaries in Khayelitsha through literature and empirical research results of Chapters 3, 4, and 5. The chapter evaluates the theological and cultural identities of Korean missionaries and Xhosa churches in terms of ancestor matters by taking into account the updated empirical results of Khayelitsha and Korean missionaries. In this regard, the main purpose of this section is to consider how Korean missionaries encounter with Xhosa churches in Khayelitsha to open mutual space and to communicate in the way of the ‘*praxis* of with,’ which is the *perichoretic* method. As we noted, the meaning of the encounter is a way to open mutual space for the intercultural communication of the ‘*praxis* of with’.

The terminology, “South to South” is problematic at least in an intercultural approach because of the preposition, ‘to’. We agree with Wijzen that the attitude of one-way traffic mission of the Western churches in the Third World in the past years is regrettable.¹¹¹ Therefore, when South Korean missionaries encounter with the churches of South Africa beyond religious cultural and regional boundaries, it might be useful to have at the back of their minds a ‘South with South’ attitude. This term ‘with’ has to be understood in the *perichoretic* hermeneutics. Are Korean witnesses then prepared to encounter with Xhosa theological and cultural identity in terms of ‘with’?

Korea had a custom in which poor artists or literary men (*mungeck*), were sometimes invited to

¹¹¹ “Is it just another example of Western knowledge export, a one-way traffic, a manifestation of a Western superiority complex in which we presuppose that our rationality is the best, that our methods are the most appropriate? Are we prepared to learn from ‘the others’, or do we want them to adjust to our criteria? Do we accept the plurality of scientific perspectives, or has the claim of absoluteness and universality of the Christian faith just been replaced by the claim of absoluteness and universality of a western rational-analytic view of science? How mutual is this mutual assistance? To what extent are we open to a reversed mission by which members of churches in the South help us to overcome the crisis of Christianity in the West?” Quoted from *Intercultural Theology and the Mission of the Church*, a paper presented at an international conference on ‘Intercultural Theology and the Mission of the Church’ at the University of Nijmegen, South Korea on 7th March 2001.

the house of the wealthy, who love their talents and want to interact with them. The owner of the house enjoyed their skill in return for his hospitality and sometimes the host might invite other talented people to this mutual fellowship. Through the interaction with other talented people, there is a flow of synergy for mutual growth. These ‘liberal guests’ may live for a long time with their hosts who enjoy their art or literature. The relationship between the host and the ‘liberal guest’ was not that of an employee and employer. On the contrary, the guests were respected and taken care of by the host. Through their literary or artistic fellowship, they are mutually supported and they thrive.

It appears that the meaning of intercultural-intracultural can be compared with Korea’s traditional concept of *mungeck* because the parties involved had to respect each other in the relation building aspect. If there was no mutual benefit or mutual development, this relationship would not be formed. Intercultural-intracultural mode is nothing but an emphasis on the attitude of doing mission in the mutual relation of ‘with’ of between the subject and the object. In Bosch’s words, in intercultural dialogue, the communicators “influence, challenge, enrich, and invigorate each other” (Bosch 1991:456).

For this reason, the “South with South” mission needs to speak the language of intercultural-intracultural, which contains the meaning of humbleness as “intercultural dialogue is understood as an encounter with different religio-culture without relinquishing one’s own claims to the absoluteness of Christianity” (Wiele 2004:9). The reason why we approach our ‘South with South’ mission in the incarnational way is that firstly, this is *missio Dei*. In other words, God’s incarnational mission model is humbleness-oriented. Secondly, we have to confess that the contents and the *praxis* of mission by missionaries are based on self-understanding of the target culture. When Korean missionaries initiate their mission in Khayelitsha, they have first to learn to overcome their preliminary understanding of Xhosa culture and religion. Thirdly, missionaries get into the mission field in which they are not invited. Missionaries are primarily guests of the target culture. For this reason, they need to be humble.

With this incarnational orientation, South Korean missionaries encounter Xhosa context with the question; how do we initiate dialogue? What are the contradictions involved? What is the mutual identity in the dialogue? What is the attitude to the other’s theological and cultural identity? How can these conflicting identities be resolved? What is mutual learning in dialogue? What is beyond mutual learning?

6.2 *Perichoretic* communication

6.2.1 Introduction

Perichoresis as intercultural hermeneutics is more than mutual learning. As we observed, the intercultural interpretation of mutual indwelling is dynamic (continual) penetrating each other for *otherness*. According to *perichoretic* framework of ‘*praxis* of with,’ Christianity has to have dynamic character to dialogue with others. The incarnational mission of God, *missio Dei* is an influence of the dynamic character of communication and to overcome colonial and functional attitude of mission, this dynamic communication guarantees the ‘culture vs. culture’ mode of dialogue. Mutual space can open not only through mutual learning, but also through devotional *praxis* based on incarnational humbleness. Through authentic encountering with others, Christianity as culture can also be challenged, purified, and grown with others in the space of ‘with.’ However, the idea of not relinquishing one’s own claims to the absoluteness of Christianity is also a central factor in intercultural dialogue (Wiele 2004:9). In this regard, mutual identity is a guard of the genuine theological and cultural identity of Christianity. Where then is this identity of Christianity guaranteed? As we established in the hypothesis, it is guaranteed when Christianity does not find its identity until the encountering phase with the other through incarnational life (*praxis* of devotion) in mutual space. Then Christianity can repeatedly discover the authentic identity when returns to the mutual space at the commandment of ‘with’. Subsequently, the ‘*praxis* of with’ is a theoretical way to practise a ‘South with South’ dialogue.

Ultimately, understanding the meaning of ancestor matters to Xhosa people and in their churches is crucial to this ‘South with South’ dialogue. For example, the empirical study indicates that one of the meanings of ancestor worship for the Xhosa people is its blessing-oriented content. It is our view that this meaning can open dialogue with others. Again, *ubuntu* is a key concept in interpreting the meaning of ancestor worship and can be used to open mutual space in dialogue, and to reconstruct *perichoretic* meaning between Xhosa churches and Korean missionaries.

At this point, it is important to consider the steps of *perichoresis*, which are mutual indwelling, mutual space, and mutual identity in order to evaluate the possibly shifting identities of both witnesses.

6.2.2 Mutual indwelling in the Xhosa context

The cultural meaning of mutual indwelling on the condition of which Christianity should continually incarnate into cultures is authentic actualisation including contextuality, dynamism, and continuity. In Chapter 3, we investigated the reason why dualistic structure of Korean theologies interrupts mutual penetrating between religious tradition of Korea and Christian culture. We shall study the problems of the one-sided traffic of religious culture identified in Xhosa mission, considering anti-functional exclusivism in encountering between Xhosa religious tradition and Christianity.

More than Asia, the African continent has a long history of theological monologue structure from Western initiative. Colonialism and its epigone, colonial mission have their origin in the African mission fields. Exclusivistic mission approach in the context of Africa had merits in that it produced Christians in great numbers, and turned Christianity into a major religion in Africa. In spite of this, colonialism and its epigone, colonial mission or cultural colonial mission, and functionalism have catalysed tradition-based churches, which want to serve God in their own traditional culture and indigenised ways to the fore. There are obviously econo-political reasons behind the counteraction of African churches. In other words, the Western economic exploitation and political enforcement, especially in the case of South Africa and the Apartheid policy of the White race stimulated the reconstruction of indigenous traditional culture among the black independent churches.

Thus, Kruss affirms that; “Zionist-Apostolic churches must be explained as simultaneously the expression of and protest against the exploitation, political oppression and cultural domination of the black proletariat in South Africa” (Kruss 1985:206). However, we cannot base our evaluation solely on desire to adhere to their traditional religious culture as a reaction to econo-political oppression. As we observed from the statistics, the perspectives toward traditional religious culture among Xhosa churches are extremely diverse. Therefore, it can be assumed that their religious and theological inclination also influence their judgement of the relation between Christianity and their own religious tradition.

As we observed in 4.3.1, exclusivistic attitude to the culture-related ancestor worship prevailed among mission boards and mission churches from the early mission history of South African church. We shall investigate some instances of the side effects of exclusivistic attitude to

mission, which adhere to colonial and functional interpretation.

In 4.3.2, we noted that the first missionary to encounter Xhosa traditional culture on the mission field, van der Kemp, tried functional interpretation of Xhosa terms to explain Jesus' work of salvation but his interpretation was based upon a shallow understanding of their religious cultural traditions. We can observe other examples of functional approach to ancestral issues among modern Christians in South Africa. Pauw approaches Xhosa ancestral worship from the interpretation of Christian services of thanksgiving or commemoration of the dead. He remarks:

What are here suggested are Christian services of thanksgiving or commemoration of the dead. Usually this service is accompanied by a feast, mainly for kinsmen and the local church members, for which something is slaughtered. This is then done without calling on the ancestors or the observance of certain characteristics of traditional ritual - among amaXhosa, for example, the use of a special spear, picking the beast in the stomach in order that it should bellow, and making the members of the lineage taste a certain potion of meat and beer before the whole carcass is cooked (Pauw 1963:42).

Lungu also suggests a similar way of encountering ancestral rituals in the context of Xhosa Christianity. The birth related rituals in Xhosa, for example, *ukubingelela umntwana* (birth of a child) and *imbeleko* (the ritual of cradle-skin) could be interpreted in the context of Christian baptism. Furthermore, the "boys' initiation ritual could be interpreted in terms of full membership of church" (Lungu 111-2).

These interpretations of Xhosa religious culture and approach in the encountering phase are nothing without functional operation. The attempt itself, which eliminates inner meanings of Xhosa ancestral rituals while trying to communicate between Christianity and Xhosa ancestor worship with only external rituals, is exclusivistic and one-sided. Even if the Church interprets ancestral rituals externally, the religious-cultural meanings contained in the consciousness of the Xhosa cannot be ignored. In other words, these one-sided interpretations ignored the contents of the people's religious culture. This functional interpretation based on exclusivism is not enough to encounter Xhosa traditional religious culture authentically. It is for the same reason that the Korean Church does not accept 'bowing' before dead ancestors. However, while Western Christianity insists on the subjectivity of religious culture, it has to consider the subjectivity of the target culture.

In this connection, Korean missionaries also need to avoid this attitude in encountering Xhosa traditional ancestral culture in their mission field. We can recall that one of the Koreans, Missionary E fully understands and indicates the weak points of functional approach. Some of them, Missionaries, D, H and I prefer functional approaches while Missionaries J and G hold strong exclusivistic views, which ignore indigenous religious cultures. Whatever the missiological stance of Korean missionaries or their theological view to other religious culture, they would need to recognise the weaknesses of the functional and colonial attitude. As we indicated above, memorial services (*chudosick*) widely practised in Korean churches as an alternative or indigenous plan cannot be the solution to the confrontation between Korean traditional ancestor worship and Christianity in Korea. The ideology of memorial service is based on a functional approach. It will be a mistake for Korean missionaries to encounter Xhosa ancestor matters from the same perspective; it can only result in domination and replacement for Xhosa Christianity and society.

If we recall that the cultural meaning of mutual indwelling of *perichoresis* is dynamic or continual mutual penetration, then the Christian message cannot be a one-sided proclamation. A way for Christianity to survive is by mutually penetrating other cultures dynamically. Christianity could open mutual space to communicate with others in the intercultural perspective. How then can we open mutual space to communicate with others in intercultural-intracultural approach?

6.2.3 Mutual space

In the foregoing, three methodological norms have already been suggested for opening mutual space. The first is that the Christian does not place himself as an observer or interpreter of the meeting; he is committing himself into the meeting sphere to open personal space. Secondly, while we recognise the existence of others and refuse to consider them as objects of possession, we can identify a sort of commandment from the face of others and open personal space. Thus, we affirm that Christianity can only hear the voice of God in the personal relation with the other, be challenged, and be reflective in encountering with Xhosa religious tradition. Thirdly, mutual space can open only through *praxis*. It means intercultural space is not a semantic or conceptual space. Rather, authentic intercultural and personal communication can be initiated through the emphasis of incarnational *praxis*, and in addition, mutual synergy can be expected as the effect of mutual learning, mutual assistance and mutual gladness etc.

In Chapter 3, we noted that as we open mutual space in considering peculiar norms of filial duty, which Korean churches and religious cultural traditions observe, we use *ubuntu* as a medium of identifying the singularities of Xhosa Christianity and traditional culture and to open mutual space to dialogue. As we studied, the most important premise for opening mutual space is overcoming tendency toward subject-centredness. *Ubuntu*, which means people can exist through others, can overcome subject-centred tendency in opening mutual space. Since what Xhosa people expecting through ancestor worship is commonly related to their daily needs our suggestion here is that, through *ubuntu*, which is a Xhosa traditional philosophical norm, we can meet their expectations and account for the meanings of ancestor worship.

Three benefits are expected through this approach. First, this meaning-oriented approach can more easily overcome the confliction between Xhosa churches and ancestor veneration or worship. Second, if we re-interpret the meaning of *ubuntu* for Xhosa people, who are living in a post-Apartheid era, we can solve problems of daily needs of Xhosa people. This is part of their expectations from ancestor worship. In the sense that this approach adopts Xhosa traditional norm, *ubuntu*, it is not just another colonial approach. The anticipation is that, eventually, Christian methods or values can substitute local religious cultural tradition.

Furthermore, this meaning-oriented approach based on *ubuntu* could be the opportunity for Xhosa Christianity to convert from blessing-oriented and animistic religious attitude to more God-centred and ethical Christianity. The third benefit is that because *ubuntu* is a Xhosa traditional norm, it can be used without confliction in the Xhosa context. In the section, which follows, we shall examine the essential meanings of *ubuntu* and how it could be related to Xhosa ancestor worship.

6.2.3.1 Mutual subjectivity and ancestor matter in Xhosa context

In Chapter 3, we observed that in the case of Korea, Korean theologians tried to open communication space using commonalities between ancestor worship and memorial service. Similar approaches of finding commonalities to create mutual space between Xhosa ancestor worship and churches have been attested among South African theologians, as we noted in the case of Lungu, for instance. Pauw also explains how Xhosa churches use commonage to find common space with traditional religious culture of Xhosa, such as, ‘unveiling the tombstone’

ceremony. Bredekamp (Bredekamp & Ross 1995:166) notes that; “this ceremony has a high degree of similarity with, and incorporates almost all the essentials of, the traditional *ukubona umzi* or *ukubuyisa* ceremony”.

Consequently, to open mutual space in the ‘South with South’ encountering, and initiate communication, we may need to consider the peculiarities of the two cultures. The problems and obstacles in their encounter are the differences between the beliefs of Xhosa Christianity and beliefs of Koreans missionaries. The first difference concerns soteriology, that is, some of the Xhosa churches believe in the mediation of ancestors concerning their daily affairs whereas the mediatorship of Jesus is only limited to salvation even as they confess God as the Supreme Being and Jesus as Christ. This idea of soteriology is not the main problem for Korean missionaries but the clear differences in matters of the status of the dead and communion with the dead. We have noted that in many cases, the mediatorship of ancestor is understood among leading Africa theologians from an inclusive perspective, which is theologically based on the communion of saints and purgatory doctrines. The Xhosa Christians believe that not only can they ask their ancestors for protection, they can have communion with them.

The second problem is about the presence of *sangoma* in Xhosa churches and their specific roles in terms of the issue of the living dead. *Sangomas* still have great influence in specific Xhosa churches even in urban areas. The conflicting matter is the fact that *sangomas* still play their traditional roles in Xhosa churches in terms of the living dead. Their roles have similarities and differences with the *mudang*, the Korean Shaman. The roles of both Shamans and *sangomas* are related to mediation between the dead ancestors and the living descendants. However, while the mediatorship of the Korean Shaman is limited to the time ancestors, who have *han* want to contact their descendants for help to get rid of their *han*, the *sangomas* of Xhosa churches are more concerned with getting ancestors to bless their descendants or to solve their problems. In this case, the *sangoma* acts as a mediator on these matters between the Supreme Being and the descendants. The third area of conflict is that most of the ancestral rituals are still practised publicly in some Xhosa churches. It is possible to change the perspective of Korean missionaries, which are based naturally on their theological understanding if we consider the indigenisation of the attitudes to ancestral rituals. These are some of the examples of peculiarities between the two communicators in terms of ancestor matters.

Nevertheless, the most problematic question is; ‘is there a way for Christianity to change

subjectivity in religious dialogue without losing self-identity?’ Whitehead (1938: 191) suggests a way of overcoming this problem in the idea of process, which is that, the Christian culture has not yet attained completion but is still in process, moving on for the completion with others, which is considered a more organic relation than segregation or independence of the other. In other words, it is not an attempt to bind my subjectivity and the other’s through the commonality of the religions but to recognise the differences in my subjectivity and that of the other, and then, mutual learning through communication can open space.

From these two premises, recognising mutual subjectivity and the idea of process, we can open communication. Therefore, this dialogue is not about commonalities but about the peculiarities of both subjectivities. How then can we open space for communication in the Xhosa situation? One way of achieving this is through *ubuntu*, which is Xhosa traditional *praxis* and philosophical norm. This we shall attempt to do below.

Sindane defines it as humanness explaining that the meaning of “*ubuntu* is a way of life that positively contributes to the substance of the well-being of a people/community/society. *Ubuntu* is a process that promotes the common good of a people/community/society” (Sindane 1995:9) *Ubuntu* can be translated not only as ‘humanness’ but also as ‘otherness’, if we adopt Levinas’ terminology. We can find a similar ideology in the norm of *ubuntu* with Levinas’ otherness, which can be recognised through the face of the other. In this regard, *ubuntu*, is also described as the idea that a “person is a person through other persons” (Ramose 1999:49) (especially in Xhosa ideology). This character of otherness contained in *ubuntu* is the most important premise for mutual subjectivity.

Invariably, this otherness of *ubuntu* becomes the foundation for explaining meanings of Xhosa ancestor worship. According to Louw (2002:5), the otherness of *ubuntu* is not only to describe human beings as ‘being-with-others’, it also prescribes how we should relate to others, that is, what ‘being-with-others’ should be all about. It means that “this philosophical word contains not merely some kind of equality and responsibility to the others” (Shutte 1993:56), but more religious bond with others. When we consider *ubuntu* as religious, then two meanings are entailed. First, in *ubuntu* terms, the dignity of human beings is endowed by divinity. Even if the norm of *ubuntu* is closely connected with the social order or lineage system, it also cannot be considered without a religious connotation.¹¹² Ruth Mompoti interprets *ubuntu* in connection

¹¹² It explored the concept of *ubuntu* within a variety of contexts, e.g. religion, politics, law, the business

with the inner energy with which each person is endowed by God; and in the same vein, (cit., in Villa-Vicencio 1994:103-104) argues that; “driven by this divine force, human beings who are awakened to this presence within them, cannot rest until the divine dignity of humankind is manifest in the entire community and society around them”.

From the religious perspective, Louw maintains that; “a ‘person is a person through other persons’ for the Westerner is totally not religious, but in African tradition this maxim has a deeply religious meaning” (Louw 2002:7). According to Broodryk, the person through whom one is to become a person is an ancestor; and the other persons include ancestors. He remarks that; “ancestors are extended family” (Broodryk 1997:14). In Xhosa society, there are organic bonds between the living and the ancestors who act especially as mediators between the Supreme Being and their descendants. *Ubuntu* “thus inevitably implies a deep respect and regard for religious beliefs and practices” (Teffo 1994:9). For example, when the people drink beer, they pour a little on the ground for consumption by ancestors. This libation is a form of ancestral ritual. Moreover, *ubuntu*, that is:

Becoming a person through other person, involves going through various community prescribed stage and being involved in certain ceremonies and initiation rituals. Through this initiation ritual a person acquire a personhood among community the living. And at the same time, this ritual establishes a link between the initiated and the community of the dead ancestors. When ‘blood makes wet the ground’ during the circumcision and clitoridectomy, it acts as a covenant with the whole community of the living and the dead (Ramose 1999: 88).

Through these ancestral rituals, the life cycle of amaXhosa is confirmed and the descendants becoming united with the whole community of the dead.

The religious character of *ubuntu* can be more clearly related to its ontology. Ramose (2002:236) categorises *ubuntu* as “one such organism in the whole-ness of being”. The meaning is that *ubuntu* understanding of being involves three levels of human existence, which he refers to as the “onto-triadic structure of being. In this ontological understanding [a human] being is categorised in the living-dead, the yet-to-be-born, and the living” (:236), and being exists in an integral understanding of the past, present, and future.

world, education, health-care, gender, globalization, social reconstruction, freedom and human rights and philosophy etc (Louw 2002: 5).

Ancestors and their descendants cannot exist without one another. Specifically, this integral understanding of *ubuntu* in terms of ancestor worship leads us to understand the being of human being from a religious angle. Therefore, when Christianity tries to open mutual space to dialogue, it becomes clear that ancestor matters have a religious character. Additionally, the otherness of *ubuntu* can be a tool for tuning and interpreting the meanings of ancestor worship of Xhosa in intercultural space. The otherness of *ubuntu* also is an excellent tool for communicating without ignoring mutual subjectivity in mutual space.

6.2.3.2 Dynamic nature and *ubuntu*

How then can Christianity encounter with Xhosa ancestral matters in the mutual space that the otherness of *ubuntu* opens? The answer to this question lies in the method of communicating in the mutual space. As Levinas mentions, subjectivity has its real meaning in the conditions of accepting love, and being devoted the other. Thus, communication with the other religious or cultural traditions involves the *praxis*, which dynamically shows them incarnational devotion and love. Communication with traditional religious culture of Xhosa is a matter of life, after all. As Barth notes, the notion of ‘man for the other’ is a matter of *praxis*. It is possible therefore, for communication to open through the devotional *praxis* concerning traditional religious culture of Xhosa.

Ramose further explains the character of *ubuntu* as *praxis*. He claims that *ubuntu* is an activity rather than an act and that this “on-going process impossible to stop unless motion itself is stopped” (Ramose 2002: 230). For him, *ubuntu* is a ‘verbal noun’ or ‘gerund.’ Therefore, the norm of *ubuntu* as *praxis* shows its ontological character that *ubuntu* cannot exist as only a theoretical being. This ontological character as *praxis* could be analogised with the dynamic character of *perichoresis*. As we earlier noted, the meaning of the dynamic nature in *perichoresis* is specified as a mutual penetrating in terms of culture. This dynamic nature is found in the humiliated love and devotion of the Trinity God through Jesus’ incarnation. Thus, dynamic communication between Christianity and others is possible with self-emptying devotion and durable *praxis* of communication with love. It becomes clearer that intercultural communication is a matter of *praxis*. In this connection therefore, we envisage prospects of opening mutual space between Christianity and Xhosa traditional religious culture through *ubuntu* as *praxis* in nature.

This approach does not imply searching for commonalities between *ubuntu* and the Western theologies, and then identifying contact points of communication in intercultural space through the commonalities. Alternatively, its purpose is to re-interpret the meanings of Xhosa ancestor worship through the norms of *ubuntu*. At this point, we shall examine the meanings of the dynamics of Xhosa ancestor worship following Barth's structure for communication.

Firstly, the cultural meaning of 'becoming like a human being' or 'seeing with the eyes' is that human is a such a being that cannot see himself except through the eyes of the other. Devotion as *praxis* is not merely listening to others, but opening my eyes to see things in the face of the other. In Louw's case, he sees *ubuntu* as a tool for overcoming "the impurities of the Western influence of absolutism, which is violation of the self-understanding of the other" (Louw 2002:6-7). This is in spite of regarding *ubuntu* as pertaining to a 'potential dark side,' in which the rights and opinions of individuals and minorities is often exploited to enforce group solidarity (Louw 2002:9).

In addition, Sono (1994:7) perceives the constructive nature or tyrannical custom in the role of the group in African consciousness, claiming that; "this mentality, this psychology is stronger on belief than on reason; on sameness than on difference... to agree is more important than to disagree". Although there may be a hierarchical or tyrannical side in terms of the potential dark side of *ubuntu*, basically *true ubuntu* "requires an honest appreciation of differences and an authentic respect for human, individual and minority rights" (Louw 2002:10). He reiterates that; "true *ubuntu* takes plurality seriously. While it constitutes personhood through other persons, it appreciates the fact that other persons are so called, precisely because we can ultimately never quite stand in their shoes or completely see through their eyes" (:11).

The diverse communications, which sympathise with the other's need and entrust themselves to its voice could be a big challenge for Xhosa Christians, who have long experienced the Western absolutism of culture and the violation of the self-understanding of the other; even they can become re-oriented in this distorted culture. Actually, during the empirical survey on ancestor matters, the attitude of the Xhosa churches was understandably closed and safeguarded. Diverse communication, which is the original meaning of *ubuntu*, is to listen to diverse meanings from others and to open them to the diversity of relationships. In matter of ancestor worship, re-discovering the meaning of *ubuntu* can be a driving force to open communication with the Xhosa

church.

Secondly, the intercultural meaning of reciprocal visibility is a communication of spontaneous humiliation, which concerns others continually beyond opening them to others. This communication of humiliation means a communication with the subject himself. This means that while the subject opens, listens and understands the meanings of ancestor matters of Xhosa people, he also has to consider listening to the voice of the meanings of ancestor worship from the Holy Spirit. The same principle is present in the fact that Jesus came and addressed us with in humble and weakness. This principle may enable the subject to realise that he is to creatively interpret and dynamically appropriate the meanings of ancestor worship with humbled and devotional features in dialogue with the other, in this case, the Xhosa ancestor worshipper.

Thirdly, the next step, mutual assistance, is an approach, which creates synergy with the other in the interpretation of the meaning of ancestor worship. It is not a one-sided interpretation therefore; Shutte (199:8) remarks that; “in order to develop as persons we need to be empowered by others”. When Korean missionaries interact with the Xhosa church concerning ancestor matters, they might learn their meanings of ancestor worship. We do not exist for the others, but exist with others. Those who are helping others have already been helped by others, in the same way, those who are teaching others have already been taught by others. This principle is found in the circular structure of devotional *praxis*. Spontaneous openness toward the ‘I’ discovered in the face of the other makes the reconsideration of the subject and authentic subjectivity of humiliation possible; then this humiliated devotional mind causes spontaneity toward the other. The true nature of this devotional *praxis* is not different from the essence of *ubuntu*. As Ramose explains through the concept of *ubuntu*, *ubuntu* also has continual and circular communication structure just like devotional *praxis* of intercultural communication. He affirms that; “Without the speech of *ubuntu*, *ubu*-(being) is condemned to unbroken silence. The speech of *ubuntu* is thus anchored in, revolves around, and is ineluctably oriented toward *ubu*-” (Ramose 2002:231). When we discover and emphasise this circular and devotional communication structure of *ubuntu*, the meaning of mutual assistance can be actualised in communication.

Finally, the meaning of mutual gladness in intercultural communication is that the subject can enjoy authentic gladness when the subject exists for the other. We can also see mutual gladness in the communal character of *ubuntu*. It seems that each person can be assessed as operating or lacking *ubuntu* through the *ubuntu* relationship in *ubuntu* community. The authentic *ubuntu* in

this community recreates the biblical norm, “do to others what you would have them do to you” (Mt 7:12), and in addition, results in happiness and friendship (De Wet 2005:18). Therefore, the basic spirituality of *ubuntu* is founded on mutual benefit and mutual gladness, which come from mutual assistance. It is also based on spontaneity and it enjoys authentic gladness through devotional communion in the communication of *praxis* with the *other*; at the same time, the other also finds authentic gladness through the authentic life of Jesus Christ in this *ubuntu*.

6.2.3.3 Contextuality through *ubuntu*

In order to escape the theological dangers of local theology and global theology, the role of authentic conceptuality in variable mutual space is continual re-interpretation of the changing meanings in religious cultural communication with the other in mutual space. In the context of Korea, its dynamic contextuality made it possible to monitor the changing meanings of filial duty and meanings of ancestor worship, which could open dialogue between religious culture of Korea and Christian culture. In the same way, the contextuality of *ubuntu* can also make continual monitoring of the important meanings of Xhosa ancestor worship possible in order to open mutual space in the context of dialogue with missionaries or mission churches, who encounter Xhosa ancestor worship.

Traditionally, the meaning of ancestor worship is that the dead can still influence their descendants and the stress is on the continuity between the dead and the living descendants. The Xhosa family strengthens the lineage relations with the living dead as the central figure. For Lungu (1982:14), the “Xhosa society is structured through the hierarchical respect system of elder-king-living dead-god. Beings in the lower zone have to respect the beings who are in the higher zone”. This hierarchy can be shown in the following way:

Higher zone	God
Intermediate zone	Ancestors
.....	King
Lower zone	Father
.....	Mother
.....	Children (cf. Qangule 1979: 67).

Continuity, “authority, worship/respect are the meanings of Xhosa ancestor worship” (Lungu

1082: 25-26). In other words, “continuity with their ancestors and their authority is recognised and respected in hierarchical society of Xhosa” (Pauw 1975:316).

The norm of respect or worship of Xhosa could be considered as equivalent of Korea’s filial duty even if ideology of filial duty of Xhosa is not developed in a scholarly way. Therefore, the foremost meaning of Xhosa ancestor worship is sustaining the whole family and society system through ancestor worship. As de Wet (2005:160) mentions, “African person is an integral part of society and thus, as an individual’, the African in *ubuntu* is only living in community. In another sense, “I participate; therefore I am” (Smit 1999:19). Bediako stresses the meanings of ancestor worship indicating that; “African ancestral cults are expressions of the family and tribal solidarity and continuity” (Bediako 1995: 223-34).

The stress on community in *ubuntu* is one of the most fundamental meanings of ancestor worship. For Xhosa people, those who live in a post-Apartheid era re-discovering of *ubuntu* can guarantee reconstruction of fading meanings of family or social kinship, which was originally a role of ancestor worship in Xhosa social system. In particular, we can have the same effect through a re-interpretation of *ubuntu* without emphasis on the religious factor of *ubuntu*.

Secondly, this communal character of *ubuntu* as horizontal community is also valid in the vertical meaning. Mulago emphasises the religious aspect of *ubuntu* as unity of humanity and Supreme Being; the oneness of community including the dead:

For black Africans, living means existing in the bosom of the community; it means participating in the sacred life – and all life is a sacred – of the ancestors; it means a prolongation of the ancestors and preparing one’s own prolongation through descendants. There is a true continuation of family and of the individual after death. The death from the invisible element in the family, in the clan, in the tribe, and this invisible element is more important (Mulago 1991:120).

The living dead continue their life through their ancestors. While the descendants can influence their living dead in certain way, their living dead are still considered as members of the family; but now they have more godly power to protect, bless and guide their descendants. Thus, their role is that of a guardian deity with godly power, and of a medium between the Supreme Being

and their descendants.¹¹³ The living dead also directly help to provide solutions to the problems of their descendants, in terms of healing, protection from evil spirits, and guidance through dreams and visions. Mama Joxo of St, John's church presents the following account:

The only thing that I know is that ancestors help you. They always keep you safe. The ancestors are related to the living because we come from them. Sometimes I slip into trouble and feel an evil spirit, but at the same time I feel that there is something safe that surrounding me (sic). I can feel that there is a heavy thing around me. Then I become safe because the ancestors are living. They help me. God is also there. I make Xhosa beer and even slaughter something for my ancestors to show my respect and thankfulness for their protection. The Bible tells about ancestors (sic). Sometimes you see your ancestors, and sometimes they come straight to you. They say, "Don't go that way." Then if you force yourself to go that way, you have problems. I believe that we are together with the ancestors (Thomas 1999:56).

Traditionally, Xhosa ancestral rituals are closely related with their life cycle, which is from birth to death and oftentimes, the meanings of the rituals are associated with blessing from the ancestors.¹¹⁴ From the empirical research at Khayelitsha, we discover modern meanings of ancestral rituals of Xhosa Christianity. The people regard the meaning of ancestral rituals as culture/tradition, respect, healing, prophecy, communication with ancestors, praying, in that order. As we observed, the traditional meanings of Xhosa ancestor worship are changing especially in the urban areas.

To satisfy the religious meanings of Xhosa ancestor worship, meanings, which modern

¹¹³ Even missionaries regard the element of fear as being the most predominant in ancestor cult, but this element of fear has been transferred from the ancestor cult to the realm of the sorcerers in modern Xhosa. They no more fear their ancestors but sorcerers (Lungu :105).

¹¹⁴ *Imbeleko* (a thing with which to carry on the back); to thank the ancestors for the child and to ensure the good health of the child. *Ukwaluka* (boy's initiation); *Intanjane* (girl's initiation), *Ngcamisa* (to announce the ceremony to the ancestors and request their blessing); as one of the initiation rituals, it has the meaning of requesting the blessing of the ancestors and protection of the boy in the duration of their initiation period.

Ojisa (to make one roast); as another initiation ritual, its meaning lies in thanking the ancestors for the healing of the boy's wounds. *Ukutyiswa amasi* (to be fed with sour milk); as one of the marriage rituals, with *umngcamo*, this ritual has explicit sacrificial intentions to ancestors of both lineages informing them that the woman becomes a member of a new household as a wife. Thanksgiving sacrifice; thanks to their ancestors for a good harvest. *Ukukhapha* (to send off); occurs a few weeks after a funeral and after a year the *Ukubuyisa* ritual is performed. It is to accompany the deceased to the ancestral world. *Ukubuyisa* (to bring back); to re-integrate the deceased back to the company of his living kinship but as an ancestor. *Intselo* (beer drinking), *Intlamba peki* (immediate ceremony after death of some one in the family), *uzico* (wearing black clothes for six months) and *Ukukhululwa kozilo* (after *uzico* celebration).

urbanised Xhosa Christianity wants to attain through ancestor worship, may be met in *ubuntu*. This satisfaction of meaning can occur through continual intercultural communication. The religious factors of Xhosa ancestor worship, which are blessing-oriented faith and animistic belief in ancestor worship, have to be re-interpreted in ethical or socio-communal meanings through *ubuntu*.

However, in the same way that we cannot substitute or reinterpret the meanings of Korean ancestor worship through the meaning of filial duty, the meanings of Xhosa ancestor worship also cannot be re-interpreted through *ubuntu*. Appropriating Xhosa ancestor matters through *ubuntu*, is only one aspect of task and is only meant to serve as an exemplar for the encounter between Korean missionaries and Xhosa churches in Khayelitsha to enable them re-interpret the changing meanings of Xhosa ancestor worship. In another sense, it can be suggested that the greater the continual monitoring of the changes in meaning, the greater the possibilities of opening mutual communication that can be guaranteed.

6.2.4 Mutual identity

The most important thing in intercultural communication is not to damage the identity of subject, that is to say, to communicate in a way that the danger of syncretism can be overcome. In this regard, we already suggested the '*praxis of with*' based on the three premises. It is difficult to continue communication with emphasis only on mutual learning, which is based on mutual equivalence of the subject and the other. The theological problem, which diminishes the identity of the subject through an over-emphasis on the Xhosa local context also, needs to be overcome. Even if Korean missionaries practise the communication of mutual learning with Xhosa Christians in terms of ancestor matters, it cannot guarantee the opening of space for continual communication without loss of mutual identities.

Secondly, the emphasis on balance between the subject and the object finally promises mutual learning, which predicts an inane possibility of future communication. However, in reality, the success of continual communication in the encountering phase cannot be guaranteed. Therefore, our concern for intercultural communication might be moved to mutual space, where conflict and confrontation between the two subjects may occur. This space can be opened through the '*praxis of with*,' which comes into being through the dynamic or incarnational *praxis* of sacrifice and devotion of the subject.

In this space, the subject realises his own authentic identity, that is to say, he can recognise his *perichoretic* self-identity as a Christian discovered through devotional communication with the other. Then the subject as a Christian becomes the responsible subject through continual calling of the other to return to the mutual space of communication. Through a circular process of communication, the subject realises, for the first time, his *perichoretic* self-identity as a Christian, overcoming mutual learning without losing his identity. The other, in this case, the Xhosa traditional religious culture in the churches, can also experience a mutation through *perichoretic* devotional process of communication. This is our confession, which can be achieved through authentic dialogue of the ‘*praxis* of with’ and it is always progressive in character.

Considering the encounter with Xhosa religious traditional culture, specifically ancestor matters, it is evident that theologians are more concerned with the Christocentric rather than the theocentric approach. Now we shall critically examine the Christocentric approach, and to determine how mutual identities can integrate in terms of ancestor matters of the Xhosa.

6.2.4.1 Critical approach of Christocentric inclusivism

Inclusive approach to ancestor matters in the Xhosa context has some peculiar and distinctive features. Inclusive stance on ancestral religion (such as Bediako’s) is that, ancestors are not cast in the role of rivals of Christ; rather Jesus can be seen as the “Supreme Ancestor” (Bediako 1995:217). Mbiti’s inclusive approach also regards African traditional religion as a preparation for the gospel. He claims that the “Gospel enabled people to utter the name Jesus Christ... that [is] the final and completing element that crowns their traditional religiosity and brings its flickering light to full brilliance” (Mbiti 1979:68). Moreover, “the foremost concern of inclusive indigenisation is to demonstrate that ancestor belief of African tradition is not in contrast with Christology, but has a consistence of Christology and ancestor tradition of Africa” (Bediako 1995:216-8).

Nicholas Bhengu has tried to indigenise Xhosa culture with Christianity interpreting Jesus as a sacrificial beast. Here, his interpretation by Lungu is restated;

They see in the dying Christ, especially His cry on the Cross, the bellowing of the sacrificial beast which in the Xhosa religion signifies the acceptance of the sacrifice by the ancestors.

In their interpretation Christ does not replace the ancestors, but the sacrificial beast (Lungu 1982:45).

In this regard, Mqhayi also treats the concept of sacrificial beast as the contact point between Xhosa religious tradition and the Christian faith. He considers Christ as the sacrificial beast offered to the ancestors, but he also sees Christ as ancestor.

Their ancestor-Christology, as an alternative logic, stresses that continuity with the living dead is not worship but a communication and union that emphasises the “existing qualitative distinction between Christ as ancestor and natural ancestor”, just like the qualitative difference between God and other divinities (Bediako 1995:218). Through this emphasis of qualitative distinction between Jesus as ancestor and natural ancestors, he theologically rationalises that its sustaining consistence with the living dead in African Christianity is not worship. He relies on African concept of personality, which is not based on sharp dichotomies between the realm of secular and the sacred of the Western, to introduce the consistency. As we studied above, “the personality of the dead is still recognised as head or part of families or societies (*Ubuntu*), therefore they do not worship the living dead, as they do not worship the living persons” (:219). While there is an important distinction between Jesus and the ancestors, there are also “qualitative levels of worship” (:224) to God and Jesus as Supreme Being and to the living dead. The second theological basis of consistency is the doctrine of the communication Saints:

African ancestral cults are expression of family and tribal solidarity and continuity and what was needed was a theology of the communion of saints that will satisfy the passionate desire of Africans... to be linked with their dead ancestors (Fasholé-Luke 1974:209-10, cit., in Bediako 1995:223-4).

In the early missionary era, Nxele had a problem with the second person of the Trinity, Jesus. He substituted ‘the name *Tayi* claiming that the latter was born of the same mother as Jesus’ (Mosala 1982:21, cit., in Tisani 1987:167). He understood resurrection of Jesus in his own way because resurrection was possible to reconcile with his traditional belief. For the amaXhosa, death does not mark an end. There has always been a belief in continuity of life after death. Tisani (1987:168) claims that; “his understanding of resurrection of Jesus was indigenised interpretation, considering it in terms of ancestor nuance”. His interpretation of the resurrection of Jesus is an example of the monistic ideology, which makes no distinction between the life beyond death and the life of this world.

Furthermore, Bediako (1995:224) claims that; “through the fellowship with holy people one can receive the sacraments on behalf of the dead, prayers for the dead, and pleading for the salvation of the dead”. Thus, it appears that the inclusive idea is often based on the doctrine of the communication of saints, which has certain similarities with African ancestral rituals so that both positions prefer the integral or monistic understanding of the secular and the sacred world. According to Westerlund (1991:17), “comparisons are sometimes made with the intermediary role of saints in Christian churches”. In this regard, some scholars prefer this terminology, ‘communion’ (Kopytoff 1971:137), or ‘fellowship’ (Makhantini 1965:155).

Fasholé-Luke (1974:214) affirms this doctrine “as a useful framework for incorporating African ideas about ancestors into Christian theology” Moreover, “what was needed was a theology of the communication of saints that will satisfy the passionate desire of Africans, Christians and non-Christians alike, to be linked with their dead ancestors” (Fasholé-Luke 1974: 209-10). This attempt directly draws attention to the problem of the status of non-Christian ancestors. Apart from simply responding with the doctrine of purgatory of the Catholic Church, Bediako interprets it in the sense of continuity of God in the African experience, and considers local ancestors as preparation of the way for the coming gospel saying,

The past in a way which shows that the present experience and knowledge of the grace of God in the gospel of Jesus Christ have been truly anticipated and prefigured in the quests and the responses to the Transcendent in former times, as these have been reflected in the live of African people (Bediako 1995: 224-5).

Nevertheless, it is also true that the indigenising effort between the communion of saints and the ancestors of Xhosa has been abused for the sake of one-way traffic of the Western religious culture. In other words, according to Lungu, the doctrine of the communion of saints has developed in the context of the peculiar Western history and culture. He claims it is unfair to impose on the Xhosa religious culture the doctrine whose historical background and experience is unknown to them (Lungu 1982:99). Instead of opening a contact point through the doctrine of the communion of saints, Lungu suggests that the norm of Christ as the ancestor or Christ as a sacrificial beast. He has two prerequisite conditions for this norm in Xhosa religious tradition. Firstly, the trouble with Xhosa Christianity was that God as the Supreme Being and Jesus as the mediator are too remote to interfere and mediate in Xhosa traditional religious view, therefore Christianity must aim to bring God closer to amaXhosa religious tradition (:98-100). As we

mentioned above, some Xhosa Christians believe that while God and Jesus as Supreme Beings are not concerned with the daily lives of the Xhosa, their ancestors as mediators care for them. Secondly, to allow the gospel to speak to the Xhosa in his own cultural tradition he insists that; “Christ can only become fully himself in the Xhosa worldview by being interpreted in ancestral term relying on inclusive idea toward other religious cultures” (:101). To make Jesus close to Xhosa religious culture, he suggests the concept of *Inkulu*,¹¹⁵ which is Mqhayi’s interpretation of Jesus and contains two concepts; the heir and firstborn. He claims that; “If Christ is understood as the heir and firstborn, terms which are derived from family relations, then there should be no problem in regarding him as part of the Xhosa worldview in which the concept of family relations is normative” (:102).

Thus, this family term could be better harmonised with Xhosa religious tradition than the Western term, communion of the saints, since Xhosa ancestors are always with their descendants to care for them. He attempts to integrate Jesus into Xhosa religious tradition and daily life but notes that Jesus is not a replacement of ancestors; He is the ‘fulfilment’ of Xhosa religious tradition (:102).

The problem with inclusive approaches of Ryu Dong-shik and Yun Sung-bum is that the historicity of the subject is weakened and considered different only qualitatively. Similarly, inclusive approaches of Bediako, Lungu, and Fasholé-Luke also have the same problem. It means that fundamental differences between human beings and Jesus are not recognised, but only relatively in this Christology. In this regard, African concept of Jesus as ‘proto-ancestor’ is normally more horizontal than the Western concept which is a more vertical relationship of the difference between God as creator and other beings as created beings (cf. Ezech 2003:292-9). According to Rahner (1966:193-7), while human beings are beings who are searching for their own genuine substance, Jesus is the being who fulfilled the essence of the human being.

It may also be of concern that the concepts of sin and salvation in Africa are only promoting the qualitative difference between Jesus and ancestors. In African context, sin is often interpreted as “violation of the harmony of society” (Sawyer 1978:34-5) and as “any act which does not contribute to the welfare and continuation of family and detracts from the *sensus communis*... the word or deed which putrefies fellowship in one family” (Pobee 1979:118). In this regard, the

¹¹⁵ *Wena Nkulu yeminyanya* (You are president of ancestors), which is interpreted by Mqhayi in bureaucratic terms instead of as a family term. See Mqhayi, Aa! Mhlele, in Bennie, W.G (ed.), *Imibengo*, (Lovedale, 1977).

meaning of salvation in African context is that which “helps in time of trouble, healing, fertility, protection from sorcery and witchcraft and evil spirit, and success in life’s venture. It did not have to do with salvation of the soul, but rather with prosperity and happiness in this life” (Staples 1981:212).

If the fundamental difference between human being and Jesus is not clarified, then the question of whether Jesus’ crucifixion, resurrection and life mean our salvation or not will remain unanswered. If his salvific life and work for us were just completion of things that happened in human affairs, then Jesus means the ideal or complete form of all human beings. The weakness of the divinity of Jesus in the Christocentric inclusivism makes the identity of the subject dim in the mutual space.

It can be suggested that in encountering with Xhosa ancestor matters, Korean missionaries C, D, and E who support inclusive ideology reconsider the weak points of inclusive approach to build mutual identity. It might prove helpful if Korean missionaries as the subject and Xhosa churches as object become more concerned with the mutual space. In mutual space, the Korean missionaries and Xhosa churches can experience circular communication of the ‘*praxis* of with’, which is a holistic way of overcoming the weaknesses of exclusivistic, inclusive and religious pluralistic approaches in terms of ancestor matters.

6.2.4.2 Holistic understanding of mutual identity in Xhosa ancestral matters

Of the various attempts to solve the question of mutual identity, the theocentric approach insures the legitimacy of the subject by finding common messianic images between religious traditions. The pluralism of Christocentric inclusivism seeks inter-religious peace through relative evaluation of Christian identity. However, we have already noted that we cannot solve the question of mutual identity by searching for the commonality of messianic images between religious traditions or through the relativistic subjectivity. Additionally, we noted that these attempts lost balance between historicity and actualisation, that is, Christian identity guarantees legitimacy when the historicity of Christianity is practised (*praxis*) dynamically through the actualisation in the mutual space.

Theocentric theologians recognise the importance of the meaning of Christianity but ignore the historicity of it. By relativising its meaning, they deny the super-historicity. The problem is that

the discussion about the uniqueness of the identity of subject becomes meaningless. On the other hand, the Christocentric approaches ignore the historicity of the subject considering it as relative. The exclusivistic approach recognises the historicity of incarnation but is prone to the danger of ignoring the actualisation of identity. It means that this approach can stress only the absoluteness of identity, without accounting for the present meaning and the incarnational life. Hence, identity has to be understood simultaneously in both historic and existential actualisation.

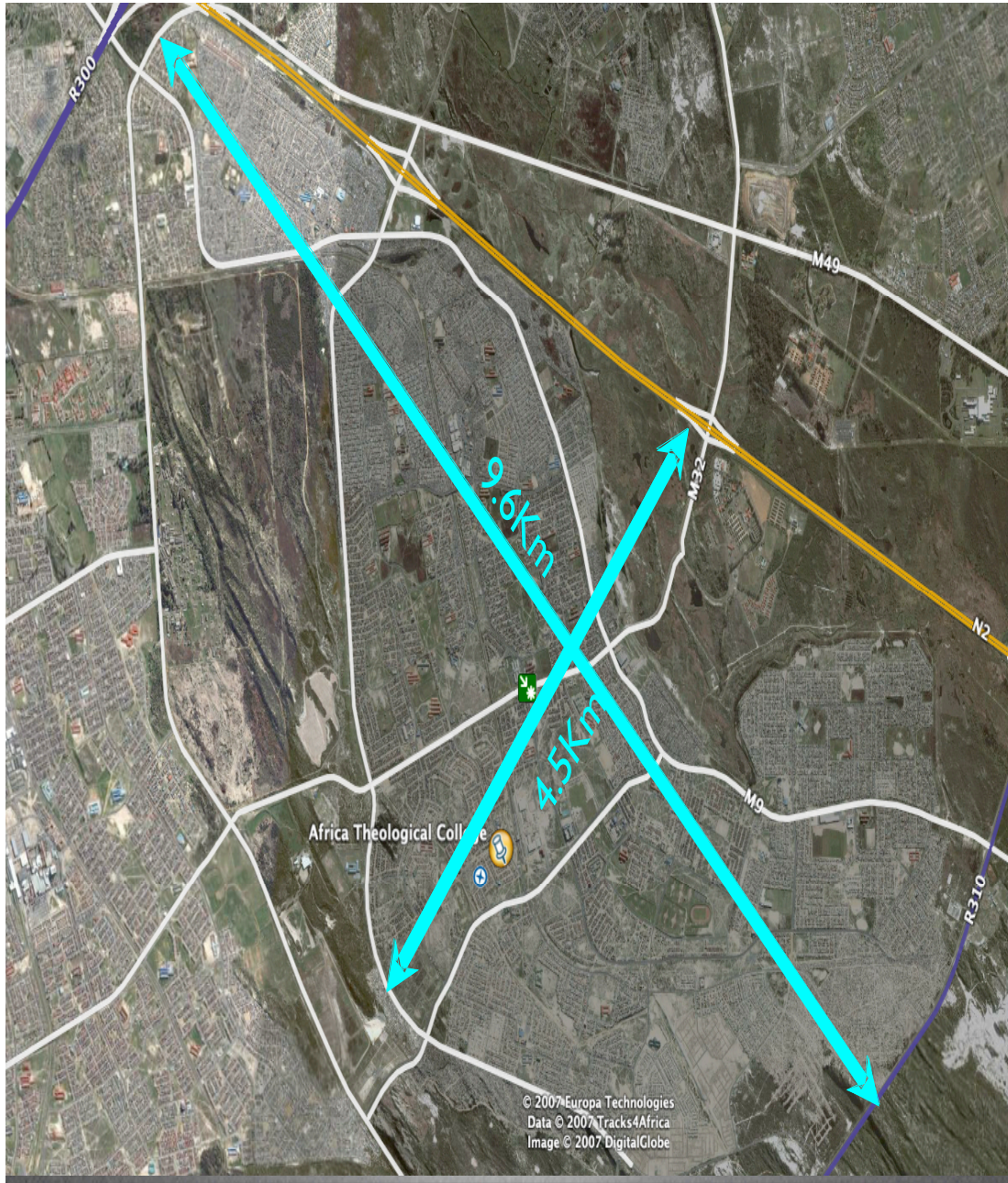
This is a holistic understanding of identity. The historicity of the subject might stress the uniqueness and finality of Christianity, simultaneously; the existential actualisation stresses the dynamic character of the subject, which is revealed presently in the Christian life through the Holy Spirit. If we interpret this in dialogical language, the subject does not find his identity until the encountering phase with the other and this is through incarnational life (the *praxis* of devotion) in the mutual space.

In Xhosa context, if we want to guarantee our identity in the encountering phase of mutual space, the balance of historicity and actualisation might be considered. Again, the actualisation of the subject appears in the dynamic incarnational life of the Christian in the mutual space for the first time (*a posteriori*). As noted above, to guarantee this balance of historicity and actualisation in intercultural communication with Xhosa ancestor worship, we have to continually monitor the changing meanings of ancestor worship as it appears in the face of the Xhosa Christian through the devotional '*praxis* of with.'

If we stress the importance of meaning, then all meanings brought from Xhosa ancestor worship in Khayelitsha usher us into a holistic approach. To realise the meanings of ancestor worship of the Xhosa Christians in Khayelitsha, they have to meet life-oriented needs such as, protection, health, blessing, guidance, job, family ties etc. As we studied in 2.2.1, the holistic approach is a theological method of applying the efficiency and meaning of salvation to culture; and *perichoresis* is the theological hermeneutics of the holistic approach (2.2.2). When Korean missionaries encounter with ancestor matters in Xhosa churches, they have to devote themselves to the '*praxis* of with', which is *perichoretic* way of communication, jumping over merely exclusive, inclusive or, religious plural approaches. Through the '*praxis* of with', which is the *perichoretic* method of communicating with others, Xhosa churches and Korean missionaries can open mutual space to genuine communication and can construct theological and cultural identities.

APPENDIX 1

Research Area Map



APPENDIX 2

Questionnaires

A. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR AMAXHOSA

A. Imibuzo yesi Xhosa

Sex (Isini)			
Age (Iminyaka)			
Baptism(Ubhaptiziwe)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Ewe Hayi	When (Nini)	
Date attended church (Umhla wokuzimanya kwakho nebandla)			
Denomination (Ibandla)			

1. About ideology of ancestor and the Supreme Being

1. Malunga nembono mayela nezinyanya kunye nalo uphezulu

1-1. Do you recognize *Thixo* as the Supreme Being?

1-1 Ingaba uyamqondana uThixo njengo yena mkhulu?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Or do you have another name for God in Xhosa?

Okanye likhonana elinye igama lika Thixo ngesiXhosa?

1-2. What is the relation between ancestors and *Thixo*? Are they the same being?

1-2 Ingaba lukhonana unxibelelwano phakathi kwezinyanya no Thixo?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If you answer no, describe the relation between ancestors and *Thixo*.

Ukuba uthi hayi, khawu sityebisele kabanzi malunga nonxibelelwano phakathi kwezinyanya no Thixo.

1-3. Do you believe that your ancestors are still alive in a certain state?

1-3. Ingaba uyakholwana ukuba izinyanya zakho zisa phila kwelinye ilizwe?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If your answer is yes, describe their conditions after death.

Ukuba uthi ewe, khawu sicacisele imeko yazo emveni okuba zibhubhile?

1-4. Have you experienced contact with your ancestors?

1-4. Unawona amava okuhlangana nezinyanya zakho?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If your answer is yes, how have you contacted your ancestors?

Ukuba uyavuma, wahlangana njani nezinyanya zakho?

1-5. Do you believe in the mediatorship of ancestors for their descendants?

1-5. Uyakholwanakwindima yokuba izinyanya zidlala indima yokulamlela inzala (izizukulwana) yazo?

☐ Yes ☐ No

1-6. Have you ever experienced the mediation of your ancestors on your behalf?

1-6. Unawona amava okulamlelwa zizinyanya zakho?

☐ Yes ☐ No

1-7. Do you believe that ancestors can curse or bless (e.g. healing) their descendants?

1-7. Uyakholwana ukuba izinyanya zinako ukuqalekisa okanye zisikelele inzala yazo?

☐ Yes ☐ No

1-8. Have you ever experienced the curse or blessing of your ancestors?

1-8. Wakhe waqalekiwa okanye wasikelelwa zizinyanya zakho?

☐ Yes ☐ No

1-9. Are you afraid of your ancestors?

1-9. Uyazoyikana izinyanya zakho?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If you answered yes, why and when do you feel afraid of ancestors?

Ukuba uyavuma, kungoba kutheni kwaye uzoyikaninina izinyanya zakho?

1-10. Tick off items in the list if you performed some of these for yourself or others.

1-10. Wakhe wazenza okanye wenzelwa lemicimbi ilandelayo, bonakalisa ngokuthi wenze un-X ecaleni komcimbilowo.

☐ *Imbeleko* (a thing to carry on the back)

☐ *Ukwaluka* (boy's initiation)

☐ *Intonzane* (girl's initiation)

☐ *Ngcamisa* /*Inthsaye* (to announce the ceremony to the ancestors and request their blessing)

☐ *Mojiso* (this ceremony takes place seven days after the boy is circumcised)

☐ *Ukutyiswa amasi* (to be fed with sour milk)

☐ *Umbulelo* (thanksgiving sacrifice)

☐ *Ukukhapha* (to send off)

☐ *Ukubuyisa* (to bring back)

☐ *Intselo* (beer drinking)

☐ *Intlamba peki* (immediate ceremony after the death of a family member)

☐ *Ukukhululwa kozilo*

If you perform other rituals to ancestor, describe the ritual.

Ukuba wakha wenza naluphina uhlobo lonqulo okanye isiko lwezinyanya zakho cacisa igama nentsingiselo yalo.

Why do you perform these rituals?

Kungoba kutheni usenza lamasiko?

1-11. What happens to people when they die? (you can tick more than one)

1-11. Kwenzeka ntoni xa abantu besweleka? (unga bonakalisa nanga phezulu)

☐ go to heaven or hell (Baya ezulwini okanye esihogweni)

☐ become living dead (Bahlala bephila nangona beswelekile)

☐ become god (Baba ngo thixo)

What else? Nayo nayiphina oyaziyo?

2. Questions in terms of relation with church

2. Imibuzo malunga no nxibelelwano neNkonzo

2-1. Does your Church allow ancestor worship?

2-1. Uyakuvumelana ukunqulwa kwezinyanya eNkonzweni?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If your church allows it, which kind of rituals do you offer the ancestors?

Ukuba iNkonzo(wena) uyakuvumela oko, ngawaphi amasiko eniye niwavumele?

2-2. If your church does not allow ancestral rituals, do you still practise it?

Niye nibathini abantu abawenzayo amasiko, nibenina ningawavumeli niyiNkonzo?

☐ Yes ☐ No

2-3. Have you experienced any conflict with your church leaders in terms of different ideas on ancestor matter?

Wakhe wakukruthakruthwano nenkokheli zenkonzo yakho malunganoku ngaboni ngasonye kwicimbi emayela unqulo lwezinyanya?

☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Questions about ideology of salvation and culture

3. Imibuzo malunga nembono mayela nentsindiso nencubeko

3-1. Do you believe that your ancestors can be involved in saving their descendants?

3-1. Uyakholwa ukuba izinyanya ziya bandakanyeka ekusindiseni inzala/ isizukulwana sazo?

☐ Yes ☐ No

3-2. Do ancestral rituals have religious factors?

3-2. Ingaba imicimbi yamasiko yezinyanya inento yokwenza nemicimbi yenkolo?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If you choose no, is ancestral rituals merely a traditional culture of amaXhosa?

Ukuba uyavuma, ingaba uYesu lo usisinyanya sokubangumlaleli wakho naye?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If you tick yes, do you understand the term, idol in the Second Commandment in the Bible (You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything), as referring to ancestor worship?

Andiyi thandi inkolo ezanaba semzini kunye nencubekozabo (ndikholwa yincubeko nezithethe zakwa Xhosa)

☐ Yes ☐ No

3-3. Do you contact God through your ancestors?

3-3. Ingaba unxibelelana no Thixo ngezinyanya?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If you choose yes, is Jesus also an ancestor to mediate for you?

Ukuba uyavuma, ingaba uYesu lo usisinyanya sokubangumlaleli wakho naye?

☐ Yes ☐ No

3-4. Do you still depend on *sangoma* (or medicine wo/men)?

3-4. Ingaba isangoma (igqirhakazi/umama-othile) unampempelelo aluzisayo enkonzweni?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If you tick yes, describe their influence and what they do for your.

Ukuba uyavuma, cacisa mpembelelo yiphina enkonzweni.

4. Questions about indigenization

4. Imibuzo malunga nemvelo

4-1. Christian teachings are compatible with Xhosa ancestor beliefs.

4-1. Imfundiso zobukrestu ingaba ziya vumelana nenkolo yezinyanya yamaXhosa.

☐ Yes ☐ No

4-2. Ancestor rituals have to be re-interpreted and indigenized in the modern Church.

4-2. Unqulozinyanya namasiko zaphindazacaciswa zaguqulwa kwibandla lanamhlanje.

☐ Yes ☐ No

If you choose yes, what are these?

Ukuba uyavuma, zeziphi?

4-3. What are the meanings of ancestor worship for modern practitioners (or for you)?

4-3. Ingaba kuthetha ukuthini ukunqula izinyanya kwabo benza okonamhlanje(kuwe)?

4-4 What do you think are the expectations of those who practise ancestor worship?

4-4. Ucinga ukubana yintoni abanquli zinyanya abayilindeleyo?

4-5. If ancestor practice has a certain value, what kind of meanings of ancestor worship might be preserved by Christianity?

4-5. Ukuba unqulo zinyanya kunexabiso, ingaba zinolutho oluthilena ukubazinalo zeziphi ezimelwe ukuba zigcinwe ngamakrestu?

4-6. Does your church suggest indigenized forms of ancestor worship?

4-6. Ingaba inkonzo iyakhuthaza indlela ezithile zemvelo zonqulo zinyanya

☐ Yes ☐ No

If you choose yes, what is it?

Ukuba uyavuma, yeyiphi?

4-7. Have you (your church) been influenced by missionaries or mission church directly?

4-7. Ingaba wena(okanye ibandla) linempembelelo eliyizuzayo evela kubathunywa beNkosi okanye yiNkonzo ngqo?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If you tick yes, what are their positive influences?

Ukuba kunjalo, zeziphi ezilungileyo?

What are their negative influences?

Zeziphi ezingalunganga?

4-8. Choose your attitude to foreign Christianity.

4-8. Khawu vakalise olwakho uluvo malunga no buKrestu obuzanabasemzini.

☐ I do not like foreign Christianity and their cultural forms (prefer Xhosa traditional cultural forms)

Andiyi thandi inkolo ezanaba semzini kunye nencubekozabo (ndikholwa yincubeko nezithethe zakwa Xhosa)

☐ I prefer foreign Christianity and their teachings

Ndiyazamkela imfundiso zobukrestu eziza nabasemzini kwimeko zezithethe namasiko ama Xhosa

☐ I accept the teachings of foreign Christianity in the context of traditional Xhosa custom

Ndiyazamkela imfundiso zobukrestu eziza nabasemzini kwimeko zezithethe namasiko ama Xhosa

B. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR KOREAN MISSIONARIES

1. *Understanding of Xhosa Ancestor Worship*

- 1-1. How do Xhosa people distinguish between God and ancestors? What are the differences?
- 1-2. What is the difference between the mediatorship of Jesus and that of the ancestors for Xhosa people?
- 1-3. Describe the roles of ancestors for Xhosa people.
- 1-4. Describe the state of the dead in terms of Xhosa tradition.
- 1-5. Are Xhosa people afraid of their ancestors?
- 1-6. How do Xhosa people contact their ancestors?
- 1-7. Describe the meanings of ancestor worship for Xhosa people.
- 1-8. What do Xhosa people expect through ancestral rituals?
- 1-9. Why do Xhosa Christians still practise ancestor worship?
- 1-10. Describe any ancestral rituals of Xhosa.
- 1-11. What is the role of the *sangoma* in Xhosa church?
- 1-12. Do you know if Xhosa Christians struggle with their churches in terms of ancestor matters or not?

2. *Response to the facts*

- 2-1. How do Xhosa people distinguish God from ancestors? What are differences between them?

Fact:

Basically, the traditional belief of Xhosa is a mixture of animism and ancestor worship in nature. This can be stated simply as “everything is alive,” “everything is conscious” or “everything has a soul.” They believe their ancestors living in nature, such as, in cattle kraal, in the river and everywhere their descendants are found. Secondly, the Xhosa originally had a monistic worldview. In the monistic idea, “no distinction can be made between sacred and secular, between natural and supernatural, and between religious and worldly. For them, god (Supreme Being) could be regarded as ancestors. Among many of the people of Africa, the concept of the deity is rather vague; they are more familiar with their ancestors who are recognised as mediators between the Supreme Being and humans. Thirdly, Xhosa people operate a hierarchical system in which they consider the Supreme Being as the creator to be at the top in the hierarchy. Beneath him are the other or lesser divinities and various spirits including ancestor spirits. Human beings and nature are next in this order. However, sometimes they do not distinguish between ancestors and the Supreme Being. They describe ancestors as ‘good father’ or ‘big ancestor’. Supreme Being is thus seen as a quasi-ancestor with whom people’s ancestors intercede on behalf of the living. The other forms of supernatural, that is ancestor, are more significant in their belief system than the Supreme Being. According to the research in Khayelitsha, 178 people among 382 answered that *Thixo* and ancestors refer to the same being.

- 2-2. What is the difference between the mediatorship of Jesus and that of ancestors for Xhosa people?

Fact:

Jesus is also an ancestor but the only difference is that He is superior to their ancestors. Alternatively, we may say that the spiritual quality is what differentiates Christ from ancestors. Jesus normally mediates concerning salvation while ancestors mediate in daily needs. However, in the research, 186 people out of 382 responded that ancestors can also be involved in the salvation of their descendants; 188 people out of 382 recognise the mediatorship of ancestors and 190 out of 382 people believe ancestors can mediate on behalf of their descendants.

- 2-3. Describe what the roles of ancestors for Xhosa people are.

Fact:

The major role of ancestors is to guide their descendants and to protect them from misfortune. Therefore, even if they recognise *Thixo* as the Supreme Being, who watches over his entire universe, ancestors are more concerned with their everyday life, health or property including their cattle and crops; the Xhosa look more for the blessings and protection of their ancestral

spirits. The result in effect, is that the cult of the Xhosa is that of ancestor worship. People believe that the Supreme Being and ancestors are working together, and that prayer and sacrifice to the ancestors is at the same time prayer to God.

2-4. Describe the state of the dead in terms of Xhosa tradition.

Fact:

Xhosa people prefer to regard the dead as the 'living-dead' instead of ancestors. While the dead are remembered by name, they are not really dead but alive in the memory of those who knew them in life as well as being alive in the world of spirits. When the last person who knew the departed also dies, then he passes from the realm of the *Sasa* period; and in effect, he now becomes completely *dead* as far as family ties are concerned. He has translated into the *Zamani* period. Hence, the living-dead have to be remembered. In the survey, 153 people responded that the departed go to hell or heaven, 81 believe that they become living dead and 29 responded that they become gods.

2-5. Are Xhosa people afraid of their ancestors?

Fact:

Some people (e.g. Lungu) suggest that this element of fear belong to the classic Xhosa tradition. Modern Xhosa no longer fear ancestors but sorcerers. Nevertheless, from the survey, even Xhosa Christians are still afraid of their ancestors because they believe their ancestors still have influence on them. In the interview with Xolani Kopolo of St. John's Apostolic Faith Mission, he confessed that; "I'm afraid that when I don't respect them they can curse me or be angry for (sic) me. I must fully respect them and do all that is require (sic) of me. Otherwise I will be a victim of every kind of disease and that can also affect our family relation." In this survey, 163 of the 382 people responded that they are afraid of ancestors.

2-6. How do Xhosa people contact their ancestors?

Fact:

Most Xhosa people who experience ancestor intervention do so through dreams or visions and ancestral ceremonies. In the survey, people used the terms, 'magical', 'wonderful' or 'marvellous' to describe their ancestral experience. Majority of the people indicated dreams as the way to contact ancestors.

2-7. Describe the meanings of ancestor worship for Xhosa people.

Fact:

The meaning of ancestral rituals is associated with culture/tradition, respect, healing, prophecy communication with ancestors and praying, in that order.

2-8. What do Xhosa people expect through ancestral rituals?

Fact:

Majority of the Xhosa Christians expect blessing, protection, fortune, respect, care, peace with ancestors, answers to their requests and salvation; in that order.

2-9. Why do Xhosa Christians still practice ancestor worship?

Fact:

Most Xhosa people think that ancestral rituals are part of Xhosa traditional culture and this culture does not contradict the Bible. For instance, Xolani Kopolo claims that; "ancestral worship is the religion of Xhosa people according to their culture and customs. We as Xhosa people we believe that we connect with God through them." There are two elements to their belief; the living has continuity with the dead as a mediator, and the dead still can influence their descendants.

2-10. Describe any ancestral rituals of Xhosa.

Fact:

Imbelko (a thing to carry on the back; that is, to thank the ancestors for the child and to ensure the good health of the child).
Ukwaluka (boy's initiation).

Intonjane (girl's initiation).

*Ngcamis*a (to announce the ceremony to the ancestors and request their blessing; an initiation ritual, requesting the blessing of the ancestors and protection for a boy during initiation).

Ojisa (to roast; another initiation rituals to thank the ancestors for the healing of the boy's wounds).

Ukutyiswa amasi (to be fed with sour milk; one of marriage rituals, with *umngcamo* this ritual has explicit sacrificial intentions to ancestors of both lineages informing them that the woman has become a member of a new household as a wife).

Umbulelo (Thanksgiving sacrifice; thanks to their ancestors for a good harvest).

Ukukhapha (to send off; occurs a few weeks after a funeral and after a year the *Ukubuyisa* ritual is performed. It is to accompany the deceased to the ancestral world).

Ukubuyisa (to bring back, that is, to re-integrate the deceased to the company of his living folks as an ancestor).

Intselo (beer drinking).

Intlamba peki (immediate ceremony after the death of a family member).

2-11. What is the role of the *sangoma* in Xhosa church?

Fact:

Sangomas sometimes work in the church (especially in St. John's and other independent churches) as prophets who foretell the future and heal congregation members using water and traditional herbal medicine. In some cases, the people believe that they are mediators between ancestor and the living.

2-12. Do you know if Xhosa Christians struggle with their churches over ancestor worship or not?

Fact:

According to the survey results, 143 people responded that they have experienced conflicts with their church leadership on this matter.

3. Response to indigenised approaches

3-1. Have you ever counselled Xhosa Christians over ancestor matters?

3-2. Have you had conflicts with Xhosa people over ancestor matters in your mission field?

3-3. Describe your attitude to each indigenous approach below.

3-3-1. Approach A

This approach to ancestor matters has three premises and distinctive features. The first is that ancestors are not cast in the role of Christ's rival; rather, Jesus is regarded as the 'Supreme Ancestor'. This approach considers African traditional religion as a preparation the gospel. Mbiti (1979:68) claims that the "Gospel enabled people to utter the name Jesus Christ... that the final and completing element that crowns their traditional religiosity and brings its flickering light to full brilliance." The foremost concern of this approach is to demonstrate that ancestor belief in African tradition is not in contrast with Christology but there is a consistence between Christology and ancestor traditions of Africa. Nicholas Bhengu has tried to indigenise Xhosa culture with Christianity by interpreting Jesus as sacrificial beast and his interpretation is quoted by Lungu thus, "They see in the dying Christ, especially His cry on the Cross, the bellowing of the sacrificial beast which in the Xhosa religion signifies the acceptance of the sacrifice by the ancestors. In their interpretation Christ does not replace the ancestors, but the sacrificial beast (Lungu 1982: 45)." In this regard, Mqhayi also treats the concept of sacrificial beast as the contact point between Xhosa religious tradition and Christian faith. He regards Christ as the sacrificial beast offered to the ancestors but he also sees Christ as an ancestor.

Their ancestor-Christology, as second logic, stresses that a consistency with the living dead is not worship but communication and union to emphasis the "existing qualitative distinction between Christ as ancestor and natural ancestor" (Bediako 1995:218) just like the qualitative difference between God and other divinities. Through this emphasis on the qualitative distinction between Jesus as ancestor and the natural ancestors, he rationalises theologically that the sustaining consistence with the living dead in African Christianity is not worship. He relies on African concept of personality, which is not based on sharp dichotomies between the realm of secular and the sacred as the Western, to introduce the consistency. As

noted above, the personality of the dead is still recognised as head or part of families or societies (*Ubuntu*), therefore they do not worship the living dead, as they do not worship the living persons (:219). While there is an important distinction between Jesus and ancestors, there is also “qualitative levels of worship” to God and Jesus as Supreme Being and to the living dead (:224).

The second theological basis for consistency is the doctrine of the Communication of Saints. The explanation is that; “African ancestral cults are expression of family and tribal solidarity and continuity and what was needed was a theology of the communion of saints that will satisfy the passionate desire of Africans... to be linked to their dead ancestors” (Fasholé-Luke 1974: 209-10, cit., Bediako 1995:223-4). In the early missionary era, Nxele had problems with the second person of the Trinity, Jesus. He substituted the name Tayi for Jesus claiming that Tayi was born of the same mother as Jesus (Mosala 1982: 21, cit., Tisani 1987: 167). He understood resurrection of Jesus in his own term because resurrection was possible to reconcile with his traditional beliefs, which is that death does not mark an end as far as amaXhosa are concerned but there is continuity of life after death. His understanding of resurrection of Jesus was an indigenised interpretation considered in terms of ancestral nuance (Tisani 1987:168). His interpretation of the resurrection of Jesus is an example of the monistic ideology, which makes no distinction between the life beyond death and the present life.

Thirdly, through the fellowship with ‘holy people,’ one can receive sacraments on behalf of the dead, prayers for the dead, and pleading for the salvation of the dead (Bediako 1995:224). Thus, it seems that this approach is often based on the doctrine of the communication of saints, which has some similarities with African ancestral rituals in the sense that both prefer an integral or monistic understanding of the secular and sacred world. Westerlund (1991:17) explains that; “comparisons are sometimes made with the intermediary’s role of saints in Christian churches.” In this regard, some scholars prefer the term, ‘communion’ (cf. Kopytoff 1971:137), or ‘fellowship’ (cf. Makhantini 1965:155). Fasholé-Luke confirms this doctrine “as a useful framework for incorporating African ideas about ancestors into Christian theology” (Fasholé-Luke 1974:214). Driberg (1936:6, 209-10) also remarks that; “what was needed was a theology of the communication of saints that will satisfy the passionate desire of Africans, Christian and non-Christians alike, to be linked with their dead ancestors.” This attempt immediately draws attention to the problem of the status of non-Christian ancestors. Apart from simply answering with the doctrine of purgatory of the Catholic Church, Bediako interprets it in the sense of continuity of God in African experience, and considers local ancestors as preparation of the way for the coming gospel. He claims that; “the past in a way ... shows that the present experience and knowledge of the grace of God in the gospel of Jesus Christ have been truly anticipated and prefigured in the quests and the responses to the Transcendent in former times, as these have been reflected in the live of African people” (Bediako 1995:224-5).

3-3-2. Approach B

It approaches Xhosa ancestral worship and the interpretation of Christian services of thanksgiving or commemoration of the dead. Pauw describes the relationship in detail thus:

What are here suggested are Christian services of thanksgiving or commemoration of the dead. Usually, this service is accompanied by a feast, mainly for kinsmen and the local church members, for which something is slaughtered. This is then done without calling on the ancestors or the observance of certain characteristics of traditional ritual- among amaXhosa, for example, the use of a special spear, picking the beast in the stomach in order that it should bellow, and making the members of the lineage taste a certain potion of meat and beer before the whole carcass is cooked (1963:42).

Lungu also suggests a similar way to encounter with ancestral rituals in the context of Xhosa Christianity. The birth related rituals in Xhosa, for example, *ukubingelela umntwana* (birth of a child) and *imbeleko* (the ritual of cradle-skin) could be interpreted in the context of Christian baptism. Additionally, boys’ initiation ritual could be interpreted in terms of full church membership service (Lungu 1982:111-2).

3-4. What are your own suggestions for the indigenisation of Xhosa ancestor worship in Christianity?

3-5. If ancestor practice of Xhosa people has a certain value, which kind of meanings of ancestor worship might be preserved by Christianity?

APPENDIX 3 Empirical Survey results

According to Generational Classification

	10 th	20 th	30 th	40 th	50 th	60 th	70 th	Others	Total
no of respondents	25	141	80	52	43	4	3	34	382
1-3 yes	14	67	31	31	28	1	1	14	187
% in Age	56.0	47.5	38.8	59.6	65.1	25.0	33.3	41.2	
% in Total	3.7	17.5	8.1	8.1	7.3	0.3	0.3	3.7	51.0
no of respondents	25	141	80	52	43	4	3	34	382
1-4 yes	18	75	35	30	25	1	1	21	206
% in Age	72.0	53.2	43.8	57.7	58.1	25.0	33.3	61.8	
% in Total	4.7	19.6	9.2	7.9	6.5	0.3	0.3	5.5	51.0
no of respondents	25	141	80	52	43	4	3	34	382
1-5 yes	14	63	37	28	25	1	3	17	188
% in Age	56.0	44.7	46.3	53.8	58.1	25.0	100.0	50.0	
% in Total	3.7	16.5	9.7	7.3	6.5	0.3	0.8	4.5	51.0
no of respondents	25	141	80	52	43	4	3	34	382
1-6 yes	16	65	31	30	26	1	1	21	191
% in Age	64.0	46.1	38.8	57.7	60.5	25.0	33.3	61.8	
% in Total	4.2	17.0	8.1	7.9	6.8	0.3	0.3	5.5	51.0
no of respondents	25	141	80	52	43	4	3	34	382
1-7 yes	17	67	28	26	24	2	3	22	189
% in Age	68.0	47.5	35.0	50.0	55.8	50.0	100.0	64.7	
% in Total	4.5	17.5	7.3	6.8	6.3	0.5	0.8	5.8	51.0
no of respondents	25	141	80	52	43	4	3	34	382
1-8 yes	17	57	27	31	20	1	2	21	176
% in Age	68.0	40.4	33.8	59.6	46.5	25.0	66.7	61.8	
% in Total	4.5	14.9	7.1	8.1	5.2	0.3	0.5	5.5	51.0
no of respondents	25	141	80	52	43	4	3	34	382
1-9 yes	12	49	29	26	26	1	3	17	163
% in Age	48.0	34.8	36.3	50.0	60.5	25.0	100.0	50.0	
% in Total	3.1	12.8	7.6	6.8	6.8	0.3	0.8	4.5	51.0
no of respondents	25	141	80	52	43	4	3	34	382
3-1 yes	14	63	34	27	23	2	1	22	186
% in Age	56.0	44.7	42.5	51.9	53.5	50.0	33.3	64.7	
% in Total	3.7	16.5	8.9	7.1	6.0	0.5	0.3	5.8	51.0
no of respondents	25	141	80	52	43	4	3	34	382
3-2 yes	16	70	34	24	25	1	2	21	193

% in Age	64.0	49.6	42.5	46.2	58.1	25.0	66.7	61.8	
% in Total	4.2	18.3	8.9	6.3	6.5	0.3	0.5	5.5	51.0
no of respondents	25	141	80	52	43	4	3	34	382
3-3 yes	15	62	27	23	19	1	1	19	167
% in Age	60.0	44.0	33.8	44.2	44.2	25.0	33.3	55.9	
% in Total	3.9	16.2	7.1	6.0	5.0	0.3	0.3	5.0	51.0
no of respondents	25	141	80	52	43	4	3	34	382
3-3-1 yes	17	77	30	24	24	1	3	17	193
% in Age	68.0	54.6	37.5	46.2	55.8	25.0	100.0	50.0	
% in Total	4.5	20.2	7.9	6.3	6.3	0.3	0.8	4.5	51.0
no of respondents	25	141	80	52	43	4	3	34	382
3-4 yes	8	35	21	18	12	1	3	15	113
% in Age	32.0	24.8	26.3	34.6	27.9	25.0	100.0	44.1	
% in Total	2.1	9.2	5.5	4.7	3.1	0.3	0.8	3.9	51.0
no of respondents	25	141	80	52	43	4	3	34	382
4-1 yes	16	55	24	26	22	1	3	16	163
% in Age	64.0	39.0	30.0	50.0	51.2	25.0	100.0	47.1	
% in Total	4.2	14.4	6.3	6.8	5.8	0.3	0.8	4.2	51.0

According to Denominational Classification

	bap	pen	zion	St. john's	o ind	ref	meth	ang	Total
no of respondents	7	12	80	43	216	9	14	1	382
1-3 yes	0	3	49	41	96	1	4	1	
% in Den.	0	25	61.3	95.3	44.4	11.1	28.6	100	
% in Total	0	0.8	12.8	10.7	25.1	0.3	1.0	0.3	51.0
no of respondents	7	12	80	43	216	9	14	1	382
1-4 yes	0	3	56	35	89	2	6	0	
% in Den.	0	25	70.0	81.4	41.2	22.2	42.9	0	
% in Total	0	0.8	14.7	9.2	23.3	0.5	1.6	0.0	50.0
no of respondents	7	12	80	43	216	9	14	1	382
1-5 yes	0	4	54	35	89	1	4	1	
% in Den.	0	33.3	67.5	81.4	41.2	11.1	28.6	100	
% in Total	0	1.0	14.1	9.2	23.3	0.3	1.0	0.3	49.2
no of respondents	7	12	80	43	216	9	14	1	382
1-6 yes	0	2	55	38	90	1	4	0	
% in Den.	0	16.7	68.8	88.4	41.7	11.1	28.6	0	
% in Total	0	0.5	14.4	9.9	23.6	0.3	1.0	0.0	49.7
no of respondents	7	12	80	43	216	9	14	1	382
1-7 yes	0	3	55	36	92	0	3	0	
% in Den.	0	25.0	68.8	83.7	42.6	0.0	21.4	0	
% in Total	0	0.8	14.4	9.4	24.1	0.0	0.8	0.0	49.5
no of respondents	7	12	80	43	216	9	14	1	382
1-8 yes	0	3	53	37	79	0	4	0	
% in Den.	0	25.0	66.3	86.0	36.6	0.0	28.6	0	
% in Total	0	0.8	13.9	9.7	20.7	0.0	1.0	0.0	46.1
no of respondents	7	12	80	43	216	9	14	1	382
1-9 yes	0	3	30	39	82	2	7	0	
% in Den.	0	25.0	37.5	90.7	38.0	22.2	50.0	0	
% in Total	0	0.8	7.9	10.2	21.5	0.5	1.8	0.0	42.7
no of respondents	7	12	80	43	216	9	14	1	382
3-1 yes	0	3	51	39	85	2	6	0	
% in Den.	0	25.0	63.8	90.7	39.4	22.2	42.9	0	
% in Total	0	0.8	13.4	10.2	22.3	0.5	1.6	0.0	48.7
no of respondents	7	12	80	43	216	9	14	1	382

3-2 yes	1	3	55	40	83	3	4	0	
% in Den.	14.3	25.0	68.8	93.0	38.4	33.3	28.6	0	
% in Total	0.3	0.8	14.4	10.5	21.7	0.8	1.0	0.0	49.5
no of respondents	7	12	80	43	216	9	14	1	382
3-3 yes	0	3	50	37	69	3	4	0	
% in Den.	0	25.0	62.5	86.0	31.9	33.3	28.6	0	
% in Total	0	0.8	13.1	9.7	18.1	0.8	1.0	0.0	43.5
no of respondents	7	12	80	43	216	9	14	1	382
3-4 yes	0	1	27	24	60	0	1	0	
% in Den.	0	8.3	33.8	55.8	27.8	0.0	7.1	0	
% in Total	0	0.3	7.1	6.3	15.7	0.0	0.3	0.0	29.6
no of respondents	7	12	80	43	216	9	14	1	382
4-1 yes	0	1	49	37	71	0	5	0	
% in Den.	0.0	8.3	61.3	86.0	32.9	0.0	35.7	0	
% in Total	0.0	0.3	12.8	9.7	18.6	0.0	1.3	0.0	42.7
Total Average	1.2	22.2	60.8	84.9	38.0	13.9	31.0	16.7	
1-11									
no of respondents	7	12	80	43	216	9	14	1	382
Go to heaven	2	5	29	5	95	7	9	1	153
% in Den.	28.6	41.7	36.3	11.6	44.0	77.8	64.3	100	
% in Total	0.5	1.3	7.6	1.3	24.9	1.8	2.4	0.3	40.1
no of respondents	7	12	80	43	216	9	14	1	382
living death	1	2	39	12	24	2	1	0	81
% in Den.	14.3	16.7	48.8	27.9	11.1	22.2	7.1	0	
% in Total	0.3	0.5	10.2	3.1	6.3	0.5	0.3	0.0	21.2
no of respondents	7	12	80	43	216	9	14	1	382
become god	0	1	2	12	14	0	0	0	29
% in Den.	0.0	8.3	2.5	27.9	6.5	0.0	0.0	0	
% in Total	0.0	0.3	0.5	3.1	3.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.6

According to Missionaries and mission churches influencing power

	bap	pen	zion	st. john	o ind	ref	meth	ang	Total
no of respondents	7	12	80	43	216	9	14	1	382
4-7 yes	7	5	13	30	84	2	6	0	147
% in Den.	100	41.7	16.3	69.8	38.9	22.2	42.9	0	
% in Total	1.8	1.3	3.4	7.9	22.0	0.5	1.6	0	38.5
no of respondents	7	5	13	30	84	2	6	0	382
1-3/4-7	0	1	9	29	42	0	3	0	84
% in Den.	0	20.0	69.2	96.7	50.0	0.0	50.0	0	
% in Total	0.0	0.3	2.4	7.6	11.0	0.0	0.8	0	22.0
no of respondents	7	5	13	30	84	2	6	1	382
1-4/4-7	0	2	12	28	56	1	5	0	104
% in Den.	0	40.0	92.3	93.3	66.7	50.0	83.3	0	
% in Total	0.0	0.5	3.1	7.3	14.7	0.3	1.3	0	27.2
no of respondents	7	5	13	30	84	2	6	1	382
1-5/4-7	0	2	10	24	42	0	2	0	80
% in Den.	0	40.0	76.9	80.0	50.0	0.0	33.3	0	
% in Total	0.0	0.5	2.6	6.3	11.0	0.0	0.5	0	20.9
no of respondents	7	5	13	30	84	2	6	1	382
1-6/4-7	0	1	11	28	44	0	0	0	84
% in Den.	0	20.0	84.6	93.3	52.4	0.0	0.0	0	
% in Total	0.0	0.3	2.9	7.3	11.5	0.0	0.0	0	22.0
no of respondents	7	5	13	30	84	2	6	1	382
1-7/4-7	0	1	11	27	42	0	2	0	83
% in Den.	0	20.0	84.6	90.0	50.0	0.0	33.3	0	
% in Total	0.0	0.3	2.9	7.1	11.0	0.0	0.5	0	21.7
no of respondents	7	5	13	30	84	2	6	1	382
1-8/4-7	0	1	10	26	40	0	2	0	79
% in Den.	0	20.0	76.9	86.7	47.6	0.0	33.3	0	
% in Total	0.0	0.3	2.6	6.8	10.5	0.0	0.5	0	20.7
no of respondents	7	5	13	30	84	2	6	1	382
1-9/4-7	0	2	7	29	40	1	4	0	83
% in Den.	0	40.0	53.8	96.7	47.6	50.0	66.7	0	
% in Total	0.0	0.5	1.8	7.6	10.5	0.3	1.0	0	21.7
no of respondents	7	5	13	30	84	2	6	1	382
3-1/4-7	0	1	11	27	41	1	3	0	84

% in Den.	0	20.0	84.6	90.0	48.8	50.0	50.0	0	
% in Total	0.0	0.3	2.9	7.1	10.7	0.3	0.8	0	22.0
no of respondents	7	5	13	30	84	2	6	1	382
3-2/4-7	5	2	10	28	47	1	1	0	94
% in Den.	71.4	40.0	76.9	93.3	56.0	50.0	16.7	0	
% in Total	1.3	0.5	2.6	7.3	12.3	0.3	0.3	0	24.6
no of respondents	7	5	13	30	84	2	6	1	382
3-3/4-7	0	2	8	25	48	1	3	0	87
% in Den.	0	40.0	61.5	83.3	57.1	50.0	50.0	0	
% in Total	0.0	0.5	2.1	6.5	12.6	0.3	0.8	0	22.8
no of respondents	7	5	13	30	84	2	6	1	382
3-4/4-7	0	1	9	21	38	0	0	0	69
% in Den.	0	20.0	69.2	70.0	45.2	0.0	0.0	0	
% in Total	0.0	0.3	2.4	5.5	9.9	0.0	0.0	0	18.1
no of respondents	7	5	13	30	84	2	6	1	382
4-1/4-7	0	1	10	25	37	0	2	0	75
% in Den.	0	20.0	76.9	83.3	44.0	0.0	33.3	0	
% in Total	0.0	0.3	2.6	6.5	9.7	0.0	0.5	0	19.6

APPENDIX 4

Interview of Korean Missionaries

1. Korean missionaries' basic knowledge of Xhosa ancestor worship

1-1 How do Xhosa people distinguish God from ancestors? What are differences between them? (This question is to determine missionaries' understanding of how Xhosa Christians distinguish God and ancestors).

- Missionary A Ancestors are relatives who died long time ago and the people believe that their ancestors can solve their problems. God is higher than everything and ancestors are below Jesus, the son of God.
- Missionary B In my understanding, Xhosa people believe ancestors are gods.
- Missionary C No idea.
- Missionary D No idea.
- Missionary E God is the creator of the world and the Absolute. Ancestral gods are beings working for their descendants after death in heaven.
- Missionary F No idea.
- Missionary G It is not easy for Xhosa people to distinguish between God and ancestors. Their understanding of God and ancestors are mixed. Many believe that ancestors can reward those who worship them and punish those who neglect them. The difference is that God is the "Supreme Being" and ancestors' role is that of a mediator between God and human beings. Ancestors are an essential link between this world and the spiritual world.
- Missionary H God is for the whole world. Ancestors are for the family members.
- Missionary I God is far away from them, but ancestors are very close to them.
- Missionary J Xhosa people view the entire universe as a living system: trees, rocks, rivers and soil are all filled with a living spirit. Their religious custom centres on the belief in God the Creator through the power and appeasement of the ancestors.

1-2. What is the difference between the mediatorship of Jesus and that of the ancestors, for Xhosa people? (This question is about Christology.)

- Missionary A The difference is that when rituals are being made they first contact the ancestors and then talk to God for they believe that their ancestors are near God. They also believe that the ancestors take their prayers to God.
- Missionary B No idea.

Missionary C	No idea.
Missionary D	No idea.
Missionary E	Jesus is the Savior incarnated into the world as the Son of God. Ancestors are beings who care for the descendants.
Missionary F	No idea.
Missionary G	Maybe, Jesus is like the chief ancestor to Xhosa people. Jesus can bring salvation and ancestors can bring blessings from God.
Missionary H	Jesus is for the White people or Jewish people.
Missionary I	Jesus is more powerful than ancestors.
Missionary J	Xhosa people continue to be influenced by the ancestors in every part of their daily lives. They say that ancestors appear as wild dogs, lions, tigers, leopards, buffalo, elephants, and birds. Therefore, ancestors are often referred to as beasts. However, for the people, there is no recognition of Christ as God.

1-3. Describe what the roles of ancestors for Xhosa people are. (This question is about Soteriology.)

Missionary A	The ancestors solve their problems, reveal things that are to happen in the future, show things that need to be done in the family in order to live good lives, provide them with money and luck, heal them from their sicknesses and provide them with jobs. They believe their ancestors are the mediators between God and men. They also believe that the ancestors protect them.
Missionary B	The role is protecting and showing the way what they should do (sic), for instance, when they move house they need to ask their ancestors.
Missionary C	No idea.
Missionary D	They think that that their ancestors watch over them.
Missionary E	Ancestors have to be respected.
Missionary F	Xhosa people think ancestors control and help them.
Missionary G	They believe that ancestors guide them as mediators between human and God. Since ancestors protect norms and ethics in the society by rewarding and punishing people according to their deeds, without the ancestors, the society is powerless to enforce the ethics and one cannot be promised good life after death.
Missionary H	They play the role of mediums for descendants so they can go to a good place.
Missionary I	A kind of healer, helper, and protector etc.
Missionary J	Ancestors indicate their displeasure to their descendants by creating illness or misfortune on the earthly plane. They also look after the family, provide guidance, bring luck, judge wrongdoers, and look after the crops.

1-4. Describe the state of the dead in terms of Xhosa tradition.

Missionary A	Xhosa people believe that the dead can still communicate and be heard. People go to graveyards to discuss their problems with ancestors.
Missionary B	No idea.
Missionary C	No idea.
Missionary D	No idea.
Missionary E	Funeral rituals are the biggest rituals, because they believe that ancestors after death favour the descendants.
Missionary F	Among the Xhosa, tradition funeral ceremonies are very important to family life.
Missionary G	For Xhosa people, like other Africans, death is not the end of human relationship. Those who are dead enter the spiritual world and live together with their families in invisible ways. They remain as part of the family, share and intervene in every family affair. They become mediators between their families and God.
Missionary H	It seems many people do not know where to go after death.
Missionary I	They get together at certain places.
Missionary J	The ritual of animal sacrifice of goats/sheep or cattle is carried out to mark the change in status of the departed spirit, about two years after the funeral. For this ritual, an ox is slaughtered. After this ritual, the spirit of the deceased changes status from that of a shadow to an ancestral spirit.

1-5. Are Xhosa people afraid of their ancestors?

Missionary A	Some people are afraid of their ancestors because they come into their dreams and punish them. The Xhosa people, therefore, use their last penny to prepare rituals for them in order to evade the punishment. But there are also people that are not afraid of their ancestors, but respect them.
Missionary B	Yes.
Missionary C	No idea.
Missionary D	They are afraid of ancestors.
Missionary E	Afraid.
Missionary F	No idea.
Missionary G	Xhosa people venerate ancestors and are afraid of them as well since they believe that ancestors can reward those who worship them and punish those who neglect them.
Missionary H	They fear ancestors a lot.
Missionary I	Yes.
Missionary J	Ancestors come at night when people are asleep, into their dreams, and command people to slaughter cattle and goats for them. Sometimes they want people to make

traditional beer, or buy blankets, as they get cold out there (sic). If the people do not carry out these tasks, ancestors show their wrath by causing people great sufferings. People lose their jobs, they become bankrupt, their children die, their married daughters get divorced, their wives become barren and they suffer from incurable diseases.

1-6. How do Xhosa people contact their ancestors?

- Missionary A They make African beer, slaughter goat or cow, and women must wear scarves on their waists and cover their hands.
- Missionary B Through worship, which is very special.
- Missionary C No idea.
- Missionary D No idea.
- Missionary E Meet them in normal life.
- Missionary F No idea.
- Missionary G They believe that they can make contact with their ancestors by dream or ritual ceremonies like initiation ceremony. They also believed that “*sangoma*”, shamans, could call their ancestors.
- Missionary H In the dream.
- Missionary I Through *sangoma*, prayer and dance.
- Missionary J Xhosa people believe that their ancestors communicate with them in dreams. If people cannot clearly interpret the dreams, they must consult with the witchdoctors who often interpret the dreams. Thus, the Xhosa regard these witchdoctors as mentors. The Xhosa believe that ancestors eat and drink and visit people in forms other than those of humans.

1-7. Describe the meanings of ancestor worship for Xhosa people.

- Missionary A Worshiping of ancestors means prosperity and progress to some Xhosa people.
- Missionary B No idea.
- Missionary C No idea.
- Missionary D No idea.
- Missionary E They ask their ancestors support for difficulties that they cannot solve. And they believe that if they do not express proper respect for their ancestors, ancestors punish them in heaven.
- Missionary F No idea.
- Missionary G As already described in 1-4, ancestors are the “living dead”. They constantly involve (sic) in the life of the living and have relationship with descendants. Furthermore,

ancestors are the most respected members of family, clan and tribe. For Xhosa people, to be cut off from their ancestors' relationships is to cease to be a whole person. Ancestor worship means having intimate relationships with their roots and it secures their personal life and social structure as well.

- Missionary H Protect their family.
- Missionary I They are going to bless (protect) them, in this regard, ancestors can punish them.
- Missionary J People have a way of explaining death. Most of those who fear death are those who see it as a dead-end or entry into the mysterious or unknown. They have a way of explaining death and what happened to the dead. It is said that such a person joins a community of the living-dead and ancestors. The living-dead are still people; they return to their families from time to time.

1-8. What do Xhosa people expect through ancestral rituals?

- Missionary A They expect healings and everything else that they need in their lives.
- Missionary B No idea.
- Missionary C Blessing and avoidance of curse.
- Missionary D No idea.
- Missionary E They ask their ancestors support for difficulties that they cannot solve. Also, they believe that if they do not properly respect their ancestors, ancestors punish them in heaven.
- Missionary F No idea.
- Missionary G They expect secure life and blessings.
- Missionary H No idea.
- Missionary I General blessing.
- Missionary J They believe that their condition eventually will improve. The goat to be sacrificed symbolises the powers of procreation, the life force and fertility. When they provide for the sharing of food at a communal level, the distribution of food brings members of the extended family together and reinforces their ties with one another.

1-9. Why do Xhosa Christians still practise ancestor worship?

- Missionary A Because they doubt their belief in Jesus, they believe that God works hand in hand with ancestors. They were born and raised with rituals in their lives and they are told that ancestors are the ones who protect and bless them.
- Missionary B They do not have much idea about that (sic).
- Missionary C They could not think it is not a kind of worship (sic).
- Missionary D I think that is their culture.

Missionary E	Because they believe that the dead are going to work in heaven continually. And their ideology of life after death is similar to that of Christianity.
Missionary F	They love their own culture.
Missionary G	Many of ZCC Christians and, especially, most of St. John's Christians worship ancestors because their concept of God and ancestors is mixed with their traditional religious belief.
Missionary H	Because they do not have a conviction of salvation.
Missionary I	If they stop to worship ancestors, they are going to lose the blessings, which come from ancestors.
Missionary J	Xhosa people are afraid to shun ancestor worship, and to worship the One True God alone because they believe they will become insane. This is a great myth, because according to that thinking, mental hospitals ought to accommodate patients who do not worship ancestors.

1-10. Describe any ancestral rituals of Xhosa.

Missionary A	The family goes to the grave and speak to the dead. They practise circumcision as rituals. They invite ancestors to bless and protect them.
Missionary B	No idea.
Missionary C	No idea.
Missionary D	No idea.
Missionary E	For example, if they meet illness or misfortune, they ask <i>sangoma</i> help of ancestors.
Missionary F	No idea.
Missionary G	Initiations etc.
Missionary H	No idea.
Missionary I	Funeral, circumcision, wedding.
Missionary J	They say that a person becomes very ill because he is being used by a certain impure spirit, or unseen force. After this spirit has entered the body, people believe that the person is in the painful process of becoming a <i>sangoma</i> (witchdoctor). This condition is known as the 'white death'. In this condition, the aspiring <i>sangoma</i> adopts strange and disgusting habits. If this person was prone to drunken habits before, now it becomes worse, always wanting to pick fights before, now it becomes worse, always wanting to pick fights with others, and lose all respect for young and old alike (sic). Some people wilfully choose to become <i>sangomas</i> , out of greed, without being possessed by the impure spirit. In these cases, a certain demon is bought. These demons are called <i>amakhosi</i> (chiefs) who become 'possessed' by the retained demons. The prospective <i>sangoma</i> , 'suffering' from this demon possession, is taken to a 'qualified' witchdoctor, who confirms it, advises the person to accept

the condition with the hope of reovering his health.

1-11. What is the role of the *sangoma* in Xhosa churches? (mediator)

- Missionary A In some Xhosa churches, *sangomas* play the role of prophets.
- Missionary B Many of the people depend on their *sangomas*.
- Missionary C No idea.
- Missionary D No idea.
- Missionary E They can call ancestors.
- Missionary F No idea.
- Missionary G Many Xhosa Christians, particularly St. John's Christians, believe that the *sangoma* is also a servant of God, like other pastors, used for revealing God's message to his people and to bring resolutions in difficult areas of life.
- Missionary H Healers who heal physical and mental diseases.
- Missionary I Mediator between God and the people and pastor.
- Missionary J The *sangoma* who becomes one by 'possession of an impure spirit' wears white clothes and white and blue beads, while the ones who buys the demon wears white and red, and colored beads, as a mark of distinction. The latter is more confused because they go to church. They belong to a denomination called Zionism, being mainly attracted by the drums, which are played (sic). Many men wear long white robes, but add red or yellow sashes with crosses on them. They carry sticks in the African tradition, and wrap lengths of rope around their heads, necks, wrists, waists and ankles, which have nothing to do with anything (sic). Many spiritual healers come from the above Zionist churches. They believe that their ancestors have become protective angels, bringing them messages from God. Thus, there is not much difference in their beliefs and those of the hard-core witchdoctors.

1-12. Do Xhosa Christians struggle with their churches over ancestor matters?

- Missionary A Yes, we do struggle with our members. Visiting the church members in their home and finding them practising rituals make them not to come to church again. Sometimes when we take part in the funerals, after preaching, we see people talking to the dead and asking them to make their way through (sic).
- Missionary B Yes
- Missionary C No idea.
- Missionary D No idea.
- Missionary E Yes, although not in all Xhosa churches.
- Missionary F Yes.
- Missionary G Some AIC churches influenced by foreign missionaries or the so-called "main line

churches” have harsh stance against the tradition belief. This kind of teaching changed Xhosa Christians to have “sound doctrine” (sic) regarding ancestor matter but in times of serious misfortune, some Christians privately return to their tradition.

Missionary H Yes.

Missionary I Yes.

Missionary J Xhosa-speaking people justify their African traditional customs through the idea that Jesus did not come to abolish the customs, but to add (sic). However, what the Bible says is: “Do not think that I have come to do away with the Law of Moses and the teachings of the Prophets. I have not come to do away with them, but to make their teachings come true.” (Mt 5:17) These words of Jesus do not mention anything about the customs and traditions but about the Law of Moses and the teachings of the prophets, which Jesus came to fulfil. But many ignorant people still argue in favour of witchdoctors especially those who think they are following their forefathers.

2. Response to the facts

The purpose of this part is to survey how Korean missionaries respond when they know and encounter the facts of Xhosa ancestor related matters.

2-1. How do Xhosa people distinguish between God and ancestors? What are the differences between them?

Missionary A No idea.

Missionary B From personal contact with some Xhosa people, they do not believe that everything is alive. Local people may believe that everything is alive but the Xhosa people in Cape Town, which is a big city, do not think that everything is alive.

Missionary C If those matters are considered cultural, I think it is not a serious matter because I consider it a kind of earlier type of Christianity. Absolutely, we as missionaries have to lead people in the right way but I believe it has to be a slow and gradual process.

Missionary D I respect their opinions.

Missionary E I find the ideology of the younger generation in terms of animism has started changing through my ministry in some Xhosa high schools. I also agree that Xhosa people have animistic ideology, but some students on the other side scoff at the idea of animism. It is quite interesting that they do not distinguish between the natural and the supernatural. This is quite similar to Asian belief but is different from the dualistic idea of the West. I think even Jesus did not distinguish a supernatural

(heaven) and a natural (earth) according to the Western oriented dualistic stance, if we consider the word of Jesus that the kingdom of God is here in earth, and it is in your mind, not elsewhere. In this regard, it seems the monistic idea of Xhosa people is not just problematic for Xhosa Christianity (sic).

- Missionary F Whenever I serve in Xhosa service, they consider God as same being with ancestor and have different style of service with us.
- Missionary G No idea.
- Missionary H I won't accept at all
- Missionary I Disagree
- Missionary J No idea.

2-2. What is the difference between the mediatorship of Jesus and that of the ancestors for Xhosa people?

- Missionary A No idea.
- Missionary B Xhosa people who believe ancestors and God think the same between God and ancestors. In my understanding, Xhosa people think God is one of the gods in which they believe.
- Missionary C If it is true, we must teach them correct Christology.
- Missionary D I respect their opinions. Many miracles can occur through ancestors but salvation is only in Jesus.
- Missionary E God is the creator and the Absolute being. Ancestors are working for the descendants from heaven.
- Missionary F I don't know.
- Missionary G No idea.
- Missionary H I won't accept.
- Missionary I Disagree.
- Missionary J No idea.

2-3. Describe what the roles of ancestors are, for Xhosa people.

- Missionary A No idea.
- Missionary B Normally when they need protection and guidance, they pray to their ancestors. Also, when they move house they ask their ancestors to protect and keep them.
- Missionary C I believe we do not have to deny the presence of ancestral spirits but I do not agree with their roles.
- Missionary D I respect their stance. If we approach this in the eyes of the West, ancestors are the same beings with Jesus.
- Missionary E Because Xhosa people believe that the dead go to heaven and can influence

descendants, ancestor worship is still practised. It seems that Xhosa churches allow ancestor worship because of the Christian doctrine of eternal life and Xhosa ideology of the life after death. While they recognise God as the creator and the Absolute, they also show their respect to their ancestors and ask for help from them in daily matters. They believe if they do not respect ancestors, they will be punished by ancestors.

- Missionary F I heard a Xhosa girl say that ancestors and God are different.
- Missionary G No idea.
- Missionary H I won't accept at all.
- Missionary I Disagree.
- Missionary J No idea.

2-4. Describe the state of the dead in terms of Xhosa tradition.

- Missionary A No idea.
- Missionary B They think all dead people are around them and in their homes.
The people think that dead people are not just dead; they are alive with their spirit.
- Missionary C I do not agree with that fact, but I do not think it is a fundamental element of the mission (spreading gospel). I believe we can solve this problem through certain steps in missions, such as Bible study and discipline training.
- Missionary D I think this is their culture to their ancestors (sic).
- Missionary E In my understanding, if descendants remember the dead, they still are living in the memory of the descendants. The research result, that 29 people answered that ancestors become godly being, is quiet interesting (sic).
- Missionary F I think Xhosa people surely can think like that because of intimate family ties and their pride in Xhosa culture. But their idea of the dead seems focused on the living.
- Missionary G No idea.
- Missionary H I won't accept at all.
- Missionary I Disagree.
- Missionary J No idea.

2-5. Are Xhosa people afraid of their ancestors?

- Missionary A No idea.
- Missionary B They are very much afraid of their ancestors. When things happen to them, they always think it is from their ancestors. When they need to move house, they think they should ask their ancestors where to go.
- Missionary C No idea.

Missionary D	It they have this idea about the dead; they can be fairly afraid (sic) of their ancestors.
Missionary E	I observed they are afraid of their ancestors because they believe that if they do not respect ancestors, ancestors will punish them.
Missionary F	I don't know.
Missionary G	No idea.
Missionary H	I won't accept at all.
Missionary I	Disagree.
Missionary J	No idea.

2-6. How do Xhosa people contact their ancestors?

Missionary A	No idea.
Missionary B	They have specific worship for their ancestor. It is regular and very specific. When they have this worship, they drink 'Africa beer' and dance to call their ancestors.
Missionary C	No idea.
Missionary D	I think that they sufficiently can do that.
Missionary E	It is a natural phenomenon to listen to the voice of ancestors. Because even atheists ascribe meanings to dreams.
Missionary F	Yes, I agree.
Missionary G	No idea.
Missionary H	I won't accept at all.
Missionary I	Disagree.
Missionary J	No idea.

2-7. Describe the meanings of ancestor worship for Xhosa people.

Missionary A	No idea.
Missionary B	They say that it is their culture. It is for protecting themselves and their families.
Missionary C	No idea.
Missionary D	I think it is culture.
Missionary E	It is not unreasonable to respect ancestors, who live in our memory. In Korea, Christians also do memorial service.
Missionary F	Yes, I agree.
Missionary G	No idea.
Missionary H	I won't accept at all.
Missionary I	Disagree.
Missionary J	No idea.

2-8. What do Xhosa people expect from ancestral rituals?

- Missionary A No idea.
- Missionary B Protection and dependence.
- Missionary C No idea.
- Missionary D It is natural to expect blessing, except salvation through ancestors (sic).
- Missionary E As we see the survey result, ancestor worship is not for ancestors but for themselves.
It is most different from Christian service and I cannot accept it.
- Missionary F Yes, I agree.
- Missionary G No idea.
- Missionary H I won't accept at all.
- Missionary I Disagree.
- Missionary J No idea.

2-9. Why do Xhosa Christians still practise ancestor worship?

- Missionary A No idea.
- Missionary B Those who believe in ancestors do so out of choice because there are Xhosa people who are not Christians and who do not believe in ancestors.
- Missionary C No idea.
- Missionary D I respect that because it is their old tradition and life.
- Missionary E I cannot accept this because the relationship between God and human beings can only be possible through Jesus' mediatorship.
- Missionary F Yes, I agree.
- Missionary G No idea.
- Missionary H I won't accept at all.
- Missionary I Disagree.
- Missionary J No idea.

2-10. Describe any ancestral rituals of Xhosa.

- Missionary A No idea.
- Missionary B No idea.
- Missionary C At least, we should get rid of these elements (ritual and *sangoma* related matters) in the Christian community especially in the churches.
- Missionary D These rituals are part of their lives; they cannot be separated from them.
- Missionary E We as human beings tend to find value in what we do. In this regard, Xhosa people seem to find their identity through ancestor worship.

Missionary F The meaning of boys' initiation for them is to become men. So they are proud of it.
 Missionary G No idea.
 Missionary H I won't accept at all.
 Missionary I Disagree.
 Missionary J No idea.

2-11. What is the role of the *sangoma* in Xhosa church?

Missionary A No idea.
 Missionary B Protector and guide to the people.
 Missionary C At least, we should get rid of these elements (ritual and *sangoma* related matters) in the Christian community especially in the churches. And we should distinguish between this and the ministry of the Holy Spirit.
 Missionary D This is an indigenised form of Xhosa Christianity.
 Missionary E That *sangomas* have specific roles in churches even as pastors means that the people have many mediators including Jesus. So, I cannot accept this.
 Missionary F If the people have more medical benefits, then the roles of *sangomas* will fade.
 Missionary G No idea.
 Missionary H I won't accept at all.
 Missionary I Disagree.
 Missionary J No idea.

3. Response to indigenised approaches and suggestion

3-1. Have you counselled Xhosa Christians over ancestor matters?

3-2. Have you had conflicts with Xhosa people over ancestor matters in your mission field?

3-3. Describe your attitude to each indigenous approach below.¹¹⁶

Missionary A No idea.
 Missionary B 3-1 Yes I have.
 3-2 No
 3-3 I am not clear about these questions. I am still thinking and investigating them.
 Missionary C 3-1. no
 3-2. no
 3-3-1. I agree with the methodology. However, we must be able to make distinctions and keep to Christology according to the Scriptures. I agree with the viewpoint that

¹¹⁶ See appendix 2.

we need to characterise the concept of ancestors. However, we need to recognise heretic factors of ancestor worship at the same time.

3-3-2. I believe it is actually the best method. However, we have to be careful not to synchronise the heretic factors of ancestor worship with Christianity. And I believe we have to keep evangelical attitude (sic) when we train the native leaders.

Missionary D

3-1 No.

3-2 No.

3-3 I agree with this approach in certain ways because it understands the situation in Africa.

3-3-1 It a good approach that can be grafted with Christianity.

Missionary E

3-1 Yes.

3-2 No.

3-3-1 In my opinion, because the gospel has a place in cultures without ancestor worship, it is not persuasive to consider ancestor worship as a pre-stage to receive Christianity. 'Union in emphasis of the 'existing qualitative distinction between Christ as ancestor and natural ancestor' is interesting, because they recognise qualitative difference (not clear). But it is inappropriate to join the Supreme Being and ancestors together. There is no persuasion on the basis of purgatory and communion of saints. Even these doctrines contradict their monistic worldview, which does not distinguish supernatural from natural.

3-3-2 This functional stance, 'accept their tradition in mere form but without its meaning,' cannot be accepted. Because meaning is revealed through form, and form is made on the basis of the meaning.

Missionary F

3-1. Yes.

3-2. No.

3-3-1. This is only theology, which is different from truths based on the Bible.

3-3-2. I think there is a better way for Xhosa Christians to serve God. Even if I do not know it, I prefer Xhosa churches to serve God in the way that God wants for each people (sic).

Missionary G

No idea.

Missionary H

3-3-1 I won't accept at all.

3-3-2 We must approach the issue according to context.

Missionary I

3-3-1 Disagree.

3-3-2 If something is necessary in this approach, we can approach it.

Missionary J

3-1 No.

3-2 No.

3-4. Describe your own suggestions for indigenisation in terms of Xhosa people's ancestor matters?

Missionary A	No idea
Missionary B	No idea
Missionary C	No idea
Missionary D	I prefer these two approaches, inclusivistic and functional, to encounter with Xhosa churches. It is not right to exclude Xhosa traditions in the name of Christianity. We are all the descendants of Abraham, David, and Jesus. It means we have the same ancestors. Gospel is not to diminish what they have in culture, but to show that Jesus is Christ, the Savior, in their culture. And we have to remember God is love, when we approach other cultures.
Missionary E	To respect and love their ancestors is quite right but ancestors have no supernatural power to help us. As Bible said, only God has all the power to deliver and help us.
Missionary F	Indigenisation is a learning process. I think it is dangerous to regard the matter as a question of right or wrong. We may find the right way to serve God with the life of Xhosa people in the light of Bible. I think it is authentic indigenisation, if Christians, missionaries and Xhosa people, live together according to the living Word of God in daily life, having evidence of authenticity of Christianity (sic).
Missionary G	For Christians, death is not the end of existence but a passage to eternal life. Therefore, it is a part of life. Christianity is not only for those who are living on earth, but also for those who passed away and dwell with God. Our God is the God of the living. Our God is "God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob". Heb. 11 listed many of our ancestors in faith and they had fought the good fight. As witnesses of life of faith, they help us to fix our eyes on Jesus our Lord. To have reverence of spiritual ancestors, reflect and try to imitate their good examples of Christian life is one of the various ways to enrich our Christian journey on this earth.
Missionary H	I won't accept at all
Missionary I	In my opinion, after people accept Jesus, we need to take them through the Bible. If they are growing in the Word of God, they will stop to worship ancestors.
Missionary J	From the Christian point of view, the practice of worshipping ancestors is out of the question. Moreover, we need to respect our ancestors by not attributing to them actions, which are unknown to us. Surely, it interferes with their peace wherever they may be. Following the Scriptures will lead us away from strange thoughts and acts, which are very detrimental to society. For the people Christianity needs to fit the African culture and meet African needs. It also shows the importance of helping African leaders to emerge from among the people and to learn to lead through study and practical exercise of their gifts. We need to look at the development of theology in Africa and the opportunities provided to study it and contribute to it.

3-5. If ancestor practice of Xhosa people is considered to have some value, which kind of meanings of ancestor worship might be preserved by Christianity?

Missionary J Christians must first understand the term ‘ancestors’. Biblically, the term ‘ancestors’ is used genealogically. It refers to ‘fore-fathers’. In the biblical sense, it refers to the first fathers of the Jews starting with Abraham. However, out of biblical text, some Christians use it to refer to Adam and Eve as the first ancestors of Christianity. In this sense, they refer to Adam and Eve as historical beings. On the other hand, African social life is comprised of two lines. The first vertical lifeline connects each human person through parents, grandparents, great grandparents and the ancestors to God, the source and giver of life. This vertical line also runs into the future via one’s children and their progeny. Families and clans run like parallel vertical threads from God through history. Horizontal cohesion of the vertical strands in African has traditionally been that of peers who are bonded via socialisation and initiation rituals. Vertical family lines and horizontal peer bonding have traditionally provided for a very strong social fabric in African society. Jesus has brought the Creator-God close to the African people in response to a deep-rooted and intensely felt need of the African, to the mystical element within the religious dynamism of the African mentality. Through him, one could be connected to God in a new way. A new communion and new community with God are possible in Jesus. Today, contextualisation has been recognized as a growing point in theologising. There is, of course, false contextualisation, which leads to conformism and syncretism. But authentic contextualisation is the fruit of genuine encounter between the Christian message and the local context.

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